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Esquire

Man At His Best

OCTOBER 1986 PRICE $2.50

THE LEADING MAN, 1986

The Triumph of Brains and Brawn



The Continuing Memoirs of Gay Talese

A New Monthly Column by John Gregory Dunne

David Halberstam on the Japanese Car Invasion

William Hurt, Thinking-Man's Actor

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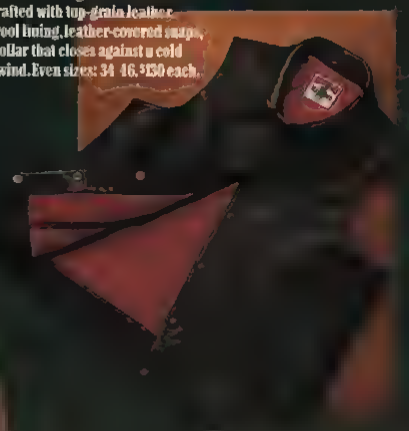
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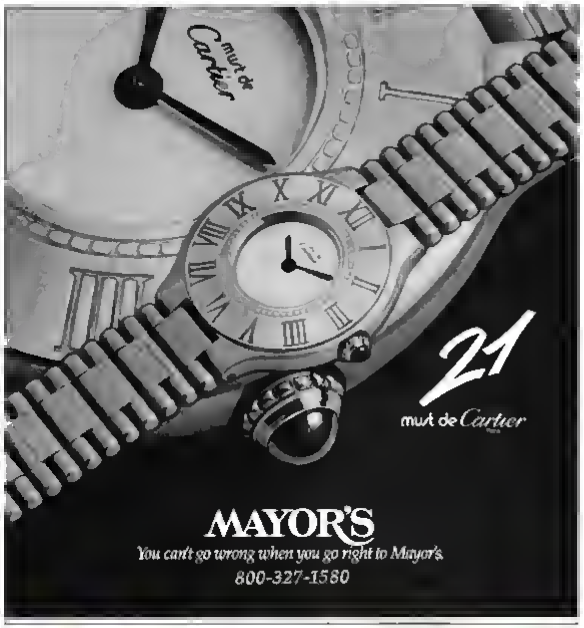
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BACKSTAGE WITH ESQUIRE

by Lee Eisenberg

AMONG FRIENDS

IT IS with great pleasure that we welcome an old friend, John Gregory Dunne, back to Esquire. This month he begins a new column, On Writing (page 205). Dunne knows plenty about his subject, having done a lot of it in virtually every possible genre: novels, reporting, essays, criticism, and screenplays. Moreover, he's married to Joan Didion, who, along with her ever-scrivening husband, shared an Esquire column called The Coast in the mid-Seventies. On alternating months, each reported on that state of mind called California, proving that the *there* there was usually not what the rest of us thought it was.

Dunne returns to us having just completed a major new novel, the trials and tribulations of which are the basis of his piece in this issue. His own writer's life, and those of others, are what his column is about—the triumphs and the tragedies, the egos and the payoffs, the community and the solitude that make up the writer's experience in America today. Says Dunne, "The *act* of writing has always interested me, though I'm wary of the fact that if you *talk* about something, you may fritter it away."

Dunne infers that there is a distinct temperament and craft required for each of writing's myriad forms. To develop a screenplay, for example, is not so much to *write* one as to *build* one, to lay bricks, as it were. As to the pleasures and pains of the columnist, he has this to say: "To do one again is actually kind of fun. It allows you to do longer work, then take off a week or so to get something off your chest. I like the relative brevity of a column: you get to take one idea and see it to its logical conclusion. It provides the opportunity to be read each month—especially pleasing to me now, in that I've been cloistered for four years. Even at my age, fifty-four, I miss the excitement when I don't see my by-line frequently."

But starry-eyed he isn't. He concludes, "I think there ought to be a statute of limitations on every column, including my own. Two years, three years at the outside. Were I running the op-ed page of a newspaper, I'd allow a pundit a three-year run, then insist that he go off to cover the department of sanitation, or chase fire engines, so he could plug himself back into the real world to relearn how people actually live. Otherwise he falls in love with his own voice and becomes intellectually flatulent."

For as long as it lasts, John, welcome back.



PHOTOGRAPH • LARA JO REGAN

John Gregory Dunne in his Los Angeles study

ANOTHER OLD pal, Delia Ephron, returns to us this month, carrying with her the hitherto suppressed divorce testimonies of the rich and famous ("Can These Marriages Be Saved?" page 98). Ephron, who's forty-two and lives in Los Angeles, is the sister of Nora Ephron, who, of course, was the author of dozens of Esquire columns in the Seventies that will be savored for a long time to come by anyone who cares about wit and insight.

Delia herself is no slouch. Ten years or so ago she published her first work in these pages, then went on to write two hilarious best sellers, *Teenage Romance* and *How to Eat Like a Child*. Her feature in this issue is drawn from yet another such effort, *Funny Sauce Us, the Ex, the Ex's New Mate, the New Mate's Ex, and the Kids*. Ephron explains, "It's a collection of pieces about the new extended family. In the past two decades everyone complained that one of the reasons family life was so hard was that there were no relatives around to help raise the kids. Now there is this extended family, consisting of former husbands and wives and their new husbands and wives and so on. Most of them, of course, can't stand each other."

CLOSER TO home, yet a third old friend is up to something big. This month marks the debut of Esquire's sister publication, *New York Woman*, a magazine by and for those who share the pleasures and the pressures of life in and around Gotham. Its editor is Betsy Carter, who for six and a half years was a major force in shaping this magazine's editorial direction. She left to start developing *New York Woman* in the summer of 1985. To all of us here, she was a rich source of ideas; but no less important, she gave us a boundless supply of energy, humor, and warmth.

All of which means that *New York Woman* couldn't be in better hands. Says Carter: "It's a magazine that will speak to the women of the city with as much intellect and compassion as the women of the city speak to each other. With understanding, irony, and sympathy. New York women are a breed unto themselves—for it is here that they are tested as nowhere else, by their jobs, by their men, by the everyday rigors of New York life. Not only do they usually survive it all, not only do they cope—they triumph. These are the dramatic facts of life that will make this magazine as compelling as it is necessary."

All of us wish Betsy and her staff every good fortune.

LEE EISENBERG is the editor of Esquire.

YOUR WARDROBE REACHES BEYOND

It's strange

A man goes to a tremendous effort to equip and dress himself in fine clothes that reflect his taste and point of view

It begins with an impeccably made suit, continues with an elegant tie and the correct shirt—then stops cold right where it shouldn't, at the wrist

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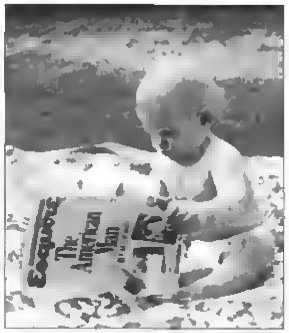


THE SOUND AND THE FURY

THE AMERICAN MAN 1946-1986

I MUST commend you on your excellent issue "The American Man" (June). To be honest, I devoured each and every article with a glee I haven't felt in some time. To say that I laughed, cried, choked, sighed, and dreamt through the readings might not be enough. More aptly put, I identified with it. It was all the men I have met and, I'm quite sure, the ones I haven't. I am putting a copy away for my eight-year-old son, along with other treasures I have been saving for him. You see, I want him to understand his father as much as I want him to understand himself. Many thanks for a wonderful issue.

Christopher Hager
Los Angeles, Calif.



MY ELEVEN-MONTH-OLD grandson [pictured above] began walking the same day our June issue arrived. I thought you'd be interested to see "the new Esquire man."

Marye Bigler
Green Brook, N.J.

I WROTE a note to your editor in 1973 when your fortieth-anniversary issue bedazzled me. In my mind at the time was the certainty that, having achieved the manifest zenith in size and quality, nothing in the future could ever compete with that brilliant celebration.

The June issue certainly came close. The whole coverage of the past forty years of the American man was original and evocative. Forty seems to be your lucky number.

Gilbert T. Hodges
Santa Fe, N. Mex.

AFTER OPENING up the magazine in various places and reading a piece here and a piece there, I decided to start on page 1 and just read the whole damn thing from start to finish. It's that good. In fact, I think this issue is the best one of the last ten years.

The reason your June issue really hit home is simple. It's about me. Or about people I know. The Hardy Boys, sex, campus sit-ins, sports—you hit the circuit. Not only did I see myself in your pages, but I saw my father as well.

David Lott
Yardley, Pa.

WHAT AN extraordinary achievement—the June issue of Esquire. It significantly, magnificently covered the decades most familiar to this man. The embracing gamut, including the little things that are such big things in one's memory and life, reflects real editorial genius!

Malcolm S. Forbes
New York, N.Y.

THE COMEDIAN Jay Leno, a great American male, does a bit in his stand-up routine about the difference between men and women. A woman will spend all day Saturday cleaning the house and regrouting the bathroom, cook for an entire week, and never say a word. A man will change a doorknob and say, "Hey, honey! Look at this! I'm gonna call the guys. Could you make some sandwiches?"

Well, it seems to me that in your June issue the Esquire staff and some otherwise talented writers wasted 356 perfectly good pages changing doorknobs.

Jennifer Robinson
New York, N.Y.

RE "SO What Do You Think of Ted Williams Now?" by Richard Ben Cramer. Mr. Cramer's article was excellent. However, he messed up a bit on his facts: the day Boudreau put the shift on, the doubleheader was played in Boston, not Cleveland. I know because I was there.

I. M. Rachlis
Hillsborough, N.C.

IN 1967 we spent our winter vacation in the Florida Keys and stumbled across Mr. Williams picking Key limes in his backyard (I think my father found out his address), and my brother and I had our picture taken with him. He seemed very pleasant, and even offered us some limes. We said goodbye, and he walked away laughing to himself.

Driving back to the motel we learned what Mr. Williams was laughing at: my father had left the lens cap on the camera while taking our picture.

When we got back to Boston, my mother, as well as my brother and I, wrote several letters to him explaining our mistake. We never got any reply at all. That's what I think of Ted Williams now and forever.

Adam Sager
St. Simons Island, Ga.

THE FIRST time I saw Ted Williams I was four years old, and as he knelt before me in the Red Sox on-deck circle at Fenway, I turned to my grandfather and said, "See that man, Papa? If God is a person, that's what he looks like."

Ted Williams has led his life exactly the way he wanted to—how many of us can say the same? He strove for perfection, and he earned our respect. He didn't fall apart, get stomach pains, drink, or take drugs. He just got better.

Anyone who strives to be the best at anything has some kind of inner fire, and definitely has an ego that propels him or her to be more than ordinary. That fire should be celebrated, not chastised.

Ted Williams, I thank you for all the inspiration and memories. I, for one, feel lucky that the only sports "hero" I ever had never disappointed me.

Suzyn Waldman
Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y.

VEILED THOUGH they are in the masculine language of games and cars, Kesey's comments ("Blows to the Spirit," by Ken Kesey and Robert Stone) are some of the worst examples of Bible-thumping, antigay bigotry I have read in a national magazine. Although you printed Richard Goldstein's insightful piece on 'coming out"—a dilemma central to the lives of homosexual men in this country—was it necessary to include Kesey's fantastic opinion that homosexuals screwed monkeys to cause AIDS? Since when does Esquire provide equal time for idiocy?

T. B. Murray
Middlebury, Vt.

Letters to the editor should be mailed with your address and phone number to: The Sound and the Fury, Esquire, 2 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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I WAS offended by Ken Kesey's arrogant, sanctimonious assertion that his heterosexuality provides him with "more good beans" than are available to homosexuals, who, apparently, are condemned to dine on poisoned cassoulet.

While it is indisputable that heterosexual males do possess most of the goodies in this society, it does not follow logically therefrom that heterosexuality is morally, intrinsically better, or as Kesey says, more "natural."

Kesey whimpers about how tough AIDS has made it for single men to 'pick up girls," because they are now dubious of any man ("we could be guilty of squirting out the stuff that kills people," he says). I would submit that it's the stuff that comes squirting out of mouths like his that makes casual sex seem deadly—deadly dull, that is. Condoms can protect us "girls" from virus, but there's no prophylactic for an inflamed mind.

Lisa Zeiger
Los Angeles, Calif.

I'M DISGUSTED as hell to learn that some dirty men have been putting their sperm in some real no-no places, which explains why teenage males are always getting cancer of the palm and why we were smart never to loan a comb to a shepherd or a cowboy.

I bet those heterosexual men and women in Angola and Zaire who got AIDS first would have been glad to know, were they still alive, that they just couldn't have been infected through the Kesey/Stone Endorsed Mode of Sex/Love. (Better check out those African and Haitian toilet seats.) It almost makes one yearn for the honest homophobia of a Hemingway or a Mailer.

Even if Kesey/Stone's brand of wisdom gives off more than a whiff of the smug, meanspirited, and ignorant, it sure fits right in with the current age: nothing like kicking a minority that's down to make a man feel like a man.

Harry Baldwin
Los Angeles, Calif.

"BLOWS TO the Spirit" was the purest bull and should be ripped out of every copy of the June issue and thrown away. I agree that getting beaten in Vietnam and the death of President Kennedy were blows to the American psyche, female as well as male. My reaction, though, is...so what? When has there been a society that didn't suffer such blows? The loss of prime hunting lands to a neighboring tribe, the early death of a beloved pharaoh? Blips. Society takes a minutely different direction. Life goes on.

Is it new when a smart boxer beats a strong boxer, when men leave their wives? Give me a break—these aren't new or even especially rare phenomena.

The Bomb, AIDS—get out of town you guys. I'm more worried about hail damage to my pickup.

Roch Thornton
Riverton, Wyo.

DID KESEY and Stone intend for their article to be taken as satire?

They touch on some issues of major concern in their article, but they tend to wallow in trivia. I seriously doubt that the outcome of a boxing match, the relocation of a baseball franchise, or the androgynous posturing of a rock star, taken singly or together, has had drastic and far-reaching effects on the spirit or potency of the American populace. Furthermore, Kesey's hypermasculine tone and meanspirited commentary make one wonder if testosterone has replaced acid as his drug of choice these days.

C. McLaurin Sitton
Oxford, Ga.

CHARLIE HAAS'S piece ("About 'About Men,'") was, I think, a seminal experience for me—one, in fact, that forced me to come to terms with the very definition of the word "seminal" and with what, really, we mean by 'experience." It brought to mind such poignant turning points as my first case of athlete's foot, the day I was cut from the football team, and the night my father, with a conspiratorial wink, gave me my first condom—which wasn't easy, since I'm (as you men say) a broad.

Haas's sentences may have sideways been written, but their target they hit dead center.

Joan S. Livingston
Boston, Mass.

RE: 'MANHOOD: First Blood," by Geoffrey Norman. Brutalizing innocent animals gives hunters a false sense of bravado. The hunters' 'final rite' of taking the blood of the animals is a perverted act, which further desensitizes human beings to the pain and suffering of other living beings. Hunting is not macho.

Ilene Jacobson
New York, N.Y.

WHAT CONSUMMATE courage it must have taken to shoot three dangerous animals! What erotic thrill must have suffused each man as he fixed his sights and pulled the trigger! There's one more predator that won't be ravaging the countryside. What manhood!

"Manhood" is Jackie Robinson, Ralph Nader, Dag Hammarskjold, and Martin Luther King. "Manhood" is Muhammad Ali, the French Resistance, and Winston Churchill. It is *not* four Neanderthals brandishing their "bravery," making conversational fodder for the winter lodge.

Halton Adler Mann
New York, N.Y.



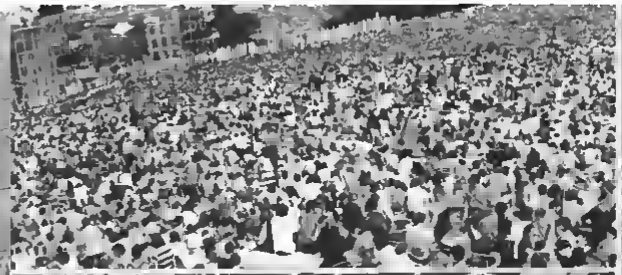
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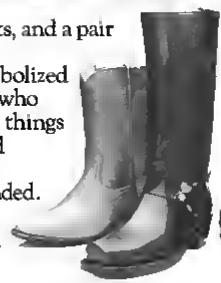
A decade in which four guys from England came west to the U.S. and changed music forever. And 400,000 people from all across America traveled north, to upstate New York, and a piece of history known simply as Woodstock.

Finally, it was a decade in which hemlines got shorter, ties got wider, and the official uniform was faded jeans, T-shirts, and a pair of Frye boots.

It was a uniform that symbolized a belief on the part of those who wore it (did anybody not?) in things that were simple, honest and enduring.

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MATERIAL VALUE

Psychedelic Relics



ILLUSTRATIONS - ARNOLD KOTH

The highways in those days were all but clogged with pilgrims and wayfaring saints, and the air was alive with visions. California drew the wanderers spiraling in, as if it were some great sink drain whose pipe led down to baptismal Truth. In San Francisco they celebrated midnight mass at such cathedrals as the Fillmore and the Avalon, where an elixir of ergot—the rye blight that maddened the medievals—made communion wild. The wanderers' choirs sang hymns that exalted millions, corrupted some, deafened a few.

If the illuminated manuscript was the singular graphic expression of the Middle Ages, the psychedelic era's signature was the rock-concert poster. Unfurl one of the latter—even a reproduction—and the lettering sends you right back to the acid days. Not the illustration, which tends to be less aggressively '60s with its antique Indians and campy collages. But the typeface is hallucinatory. It teems and swirls, becoming the body of a peacock or an idol or an odalisque. It crouches, springs, strangles sense in jungly tendrils. You can't read it without the suspension of reasonable expectation that the times themselves demanded.

Beneath the craziness, however, the typeface most often derives from art-nouveau styles of sixty years before. That's fitting: art nouveau was the culmination of the last century's own hippie aesthetic movements—starting with Blake and running through the Pre-Raphaelites and the Gothic Revival—which looked to a time before the ugly rise of industry, even before the Age of Reason, for utopia. And art nouveau engendered its own great epoch of poster-making, that of Mucha and Toulouse-Lautrec.

Interpreting a nineteenth-century vision of the way folks saw six centuries ago, the psychedelic-poster artists fell into the long tradition of revolutionary nostalgia. If the Day-Glo colors they favored make their work appear as modern as tomorrow's trash, it's probably just because their ergot, LSD, was a synthetic derivative. Mucha's contemporaries had to make do with absinthe.

TRIPPING DOWN MEMORY LANE

Those nostalgic for the psychedelic revolution usually date the *belle époque* of its poster art from 1966 to 1971. It was in February of the former year that Chet Helms first booked the Fillmore Auditorium, under the aegis of Family Dog Productions. Family Dog was a platoon-size commune whose members reputedly planned to go into the pet-cemetery business before Helms happened along. Helms had hitchhiked out from Austin with Janis Joplin in '63; his basement jam sessions inspired his fellow communards to hold the original big San Francisco freak-together rock dance two years later, at a waterfront union hall.

Helms secured the Fillmore through the good offices of Bill Graham, who'd been putting on a series of cultural benefits there that also involved a historically significant amount of freaking. The two impresarios pooled their energies for four shows at the auditorium before the freakiness they'd helped unleash blew them apart. Graham kept the Fillmore; Helms landed on his feet at his own venue, the Avalon Ballroom. The trauma emboldened him: for the Avalon's first show, featuring the Blues Project, Helms commissioned—and helped design—the world's first full-color psychedelic poster.

It made the monochrome posters for earlier events, however freely drawn, look dowdy. And it spurred further innovation. Helms was working with a friend and self-taught artist, Wes Wilson; both men were former printers, eager to see whether press rollers could turn out illuminated manuscripts for the new believers. The collaborators weren't squeamish about incorporating contemporary advertising techniques: a local commercial artist who'd filled a billboard with a lion composed entirely of letters was a strong influence. They used a color wheel to seek out chromatic clashes that would appall the uninitiated and, in the words of one aficionado, "make reality flow sideways" for the hip.

The hip tore the posters down as soon as they went up. "At first," Chet Helms recalls, "that sort of flipped us out. But then you'd find the same poster in a big crash pad, taped right on the refrigerator where forty prime customers would see it every day." Helms knew he'd struck a deep chord.

Bill Graham knew it too. He hired his own full-color man, the moment he was able, he snatched up Wilson himself, offering a measure of artistic freedom that Helms seemed unwilling to provide. But Wilson was not the only flame-brained artist in San Francisco. Rick Griffin stepped up to Helms's drafting table, as did Victor Moscoso, the mononymous Kelley, and a man called Mouse. All eventually went to work for Graham, but the rivalry between the lords of Fillmore and Avalon seems puny next to what the charged climate had brought to life: the typography of a regenerated way of seeing.

FROM CRASH PAD TO OUR PAD

By 1971, the Avalon was three years dead. The top artists had largely moved on to band pin-

ups and album covers, neither of which conveys the urgent *now*ness of the concert posters, the top bands were turning to radio to tout their tours. Rock palaces had opened all over America, most of them churning out shamelessly derivative placards. The San Francisco halls now sold posters through the record companies and by mail order; the good old numbers were already in reprints. The walls, the ceilings of every crash pad were covered. The psychedelic poster had become trite.

But cliches don't always stay cliched. A few of the faithful had already begun squirreling away the artifacts, intuiting that some future generation might crave anything mind-blowing. So many posters ended up as landfill that only a dozen or so complete sets of first printings from the Avalon and Fillmore have survived, and most of these were compiled before 1975. As a result, these paper products of a barefoot past are now worth money.

"I thought it would be long after I was dead that they'd become this valuable," says a collector, who, having been burgled of several irreplaceables, habitually withholds his name from print. When an Avalon-Fillmore set does come on the market nowadays it may command a price of $30,000—nearly twice that if handbills and postcards are included. One rare poster by Rick Griffin for a Grateful Dead gig in Hawaii (it was canceled) recently changed hands for a reported $1,100. (The band matters: fans of the 13th Floor Elevators don't seem to be as apt as Deadheads to pay top dollar for memorabilia.) Easy-to-find items that sold for a buck in 1967 now cost ten times that much, and an early Wilson piece that could be had for $100 three years ago might bring in $250 now.

Even if you're one of those affluent 1980s ex-hippies, you don't want to be paying hard-earned lucre for some facsimile, it's got to be a true piece of that great unbound fluorescent text. To help you tell the difference, an exegete named E. King offers *A Collector's Guide to the Numbered Dance Posters Created for Bill Graham and the Family Dog 1966-1973* (Svaha Press, P.O. Box 4297, Berkeley, California 94704). The *Guide* reveals, for instance, that on the reprint of one poster, "the entire left side of the woman's nose is blacked out. . . . On the original a small spot of light is reflected off the flared part of her left nostril.' It is indispensable.

Also indispensable is an honest, knowledgeable dealer. In California, the poster holy land, the experts swear by E. King (address above), Dennis King (no relation), King's Baseball Cards, 2132 Center Street, Berkeley 94704; and John Berns, P.O. Box 27394, San Francisco 94127. In New York, they trust Jacaeber Kastor and his Psychedelic Solution gallery, 33 West Eighth Street, New York 10011. These purveyors can put you in touch with their smattering of counterparts in other regions.

Once you've entered into the collectors' network, people will begin calling your attention to the real esoterica: the round posters from Los Angeles's Kaleidoscope, for example, and Gary Grimshaw's hotly contested work—is it masterful or mimetic?—for the Grande Ballroom in Detroit. You'll want to begin investing in acid-free (no pun intended) storage sleeves. And you'll need boxes capable of keeping out the hungry vermin.

As with any relics, vermin can present a problem. In the mid-1970s one collector lost a whole Avalon-Fillmore series overnight to rats and had to build his pile again from scratch. Of the rats involved, it's said that one now runs a spiritual weight-loss clinic in Marin County, another begged on the streets of Bombay for a few years, before getting his M.B.A.—he works on Wall Street now as an analyst of the cheese industry; and the third does some sort of farming in Maui that he won't talk about. It must have been something they ate.

—**Kenneth Miller**

CLASSICS
The Tennis Shirt



PHOTOGRAPH • PETER JOHANSKY

It's hard to imagine now, but well into the 1920s men played tennis in full-length trousers and long-sleeved shirts. During warm-up practice they also wore blazers. Before 1900, they even wore ties. Tennis was a rather sedate game in its early days, but by the 1920s a good many players wanted to loosen it up a bit. One player finally took matters into his own hands—a Frenchman by the name of Rene Lacoste.

Lacoste was a singles champion in France, Great Britain, and the United States. His game was fast and so aggressive that the French called him *Le Crocodile*. Lacoste was the John McEnroe of his era. He complained that the official uniform interfered with his game, and when nothing was done about it, he simply showed up on the court wearing an odd-looking short-sleeved shirt that he had designed himself. It was based on the long-sleeved polo shirt. The back was longer than the front, and it had a crocodile stitched over the breast—not an alligator, as many people think; an alligator is a much slower-moving animal, sluggish, in fact.

The distinctive thing about Lacoste's shirt wasn't the crocodile or the longer back but the fabric, which was a cotton pique knit that Lacoste had invented especially for the shirt. It breathed, and it was resilient. Today the weave is known as "the Lacoste."

Lacoste became a professional shirtmaker in 1929, but his tennis shirt didn't really hit the big time until the early 1950s when President Eisenhower was photographed playing golf in one. That launched it.

Over the next twenty years, Lacoste shirts developed a certain cachet. They were cool, comfortable, and neat-looking. At some point, however, things got out of hand. Lacostes came to be seen as part of the preppie uniform, and as such they came in for a fair amount of negative PR. It is hard to think of another really good item of clothing, in fact, that has had such scorn heaped upon it.

The animus was, and is, directed entirely at the crocodile insignia, not at the shirt. When it comes to the actual shirt itself, there doesn't seem to be any problem. The fabric, the cut, the collar, and the two-button opening have all been slavishly copied by countless imitators. The Lacoste design, moreover, has emerged as the generic tennis shirt. Its imitators, of course, have their own insignias, but none has so far been encumbered by any adverse symbolism. To their credit, the Lacostes steadfastly cling to their crocodiles. Try to take one off and you'll tear holes in the shirt, they are



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This is for everyone who cringes if a little raad tar, a bug, ar, perish the thaught, a bird disgraces the polished perfection of his shimmering sheet metal.

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Which is to say, it's an all-season performance tire.

So now in rain ar snow you can da something novel with your performonce car.

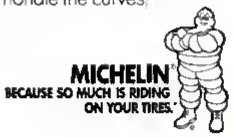
You can actually use it.

Needless to say, a performance tire should eat up the road. But that doesn't mean the road should eat up the tire.

The Sport EP-X gives you the kind of mileage you've come to expect from a Michelin.

It performs great. And looks great. So, it not only stands out on the road.

But in the parking lot. Which is one more place you're likely to discover how beautifully it can handle the curves.



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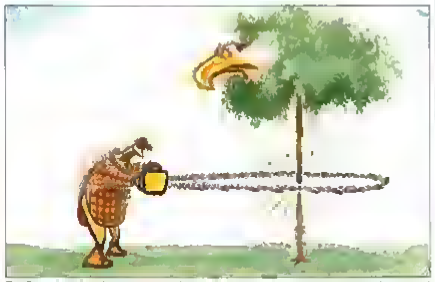
attached with nylon thread in a particularly tenacious stitch.

Once René Lacoste had brought the top half of the tennis uniform up to date, it remained for someone else to do the same for the bottom. Bunny Austin was the man who did it. He appeared in shorts at the 1932 Forest Hills championships. But that's another story.

—John Berendt

COUNTRY LIFE

How to Buy a Chain Saw



Live in the country long enough and sooner or later you're going to need a chain saw. Trees get old and need to come down. There's land to clear and firewood to be cut. Now, you can either hire someone with a chain saw to do the work for you, or you can buy a saw. After a few years of paying someone else, I finally did what most people do: I went into town and bought a saw.

There seems to be only one constant with first chain saw purchases: people buy a saw that's too small. Probably it's because a chain saw is an intimidating instrument, so the thinking is that smaller is safer. Not true, but understandable. In the part of New England where I live, many of the people I know are or were loggers. Most grew up using a chain saw, and for them it's second nature to knock down a sixty-foot maple. It's also second nature for them to give advice.

Decide what you're going to use the saw for. That was their first advice. In my case I thought it would just be small trees, but when pressed on the matter, I realized that there were some big elms and a couple of fair-size hardwoods that needed to come down. My first inclination had been to buy a saw with a twelve-inch bar. But sixteens and eighteens are far more common and much more manageable. A logger in Oregon might use a saw with a thirty-six- or even sixty-inch bar, but that's an extreme.

Safety and convenience are the important factors. For safety, buy a saw that feels comfortable. If a saw feels awkward, the chances of your making a mistake with it increase dramatically. Also for safety, make sure it has a sturdy kickback guard. The guard stops the chain should the saw kick back at you, a potentially dangerous occurrence that happens when the chain hits a nail or bit of wire embedded in the tree. Pushing the bar straight into a tree or log will do it, too.

For convenience, buy a saw that automatically oils the chain. Today almost any machine will be self-lubricating, but it doesn't hurt to ask. Equally important is the starter. There are saws on the market that are nearly impossible to start; others make the process almost as simple as starting a car. Insist on starting the model you are interested in, and look for electronic ignition.

It's important to find a dealer who knows chain saws. Tell him what you're going to use the saw for, and be honest about your experience. If you've never used one, say so. Any conscientious dealer will demonstrate and offer tips on safe operation. Money will enter into it, of course. For a top-quality saw like a Stihl, with an eighteen-inch bar and all the features, plan on spending at least $500. McCullochs, Husqvarnas, and Homelites are in the same neighborhood. I bought a Stihl 038 Magnum for one reason: I like the feel of it. The balance is right, in my hands at least, and the saw feels solid, durable, precise.

After you have your saw, it just makes sense to maintain it. Keep the chain sharp, a process that involves a little time and a round file. I sharpen the chain myself three or four times, then every fifth time take it to the dealer to have it machine sharpened. The rest isn't much different from maintaining a car: just keep it reasonably clean and oiled and it will run for years.

One last word about safety. Once or twice a year, it seems that someone nearby gets hurt using a chain saw. If it's any consolation to the novice, accidents happen as often to the experienced. Your mind can't wander when you're using a saw. Trees get hung up, the chain can skip across a log, saws kick back, trees don't always fall where they're supposed to. Gloves and protective glasses or goggles are musts, and some people add a hard hat and ear protectors.

The rewards of cutting down your own trees are there, whether it's for firewood or just to make the place look better. There is also the excuse it gives you to get out in the woods for an afternoon and accomplish something you can look at and be proud of, and that's perhaps the greatest reward. —Charles Neave

BIBLIOPHILIA

What Matters in Alabama

Once defiantly unreconstructed, the sovereign state of Alabama has, grudgingly but irrevocably, accepted membership in both the New South and the Sunbelt. In fact, says Esquire contributing editor Geoffrey Norman in *Alabama Showdown* (Henry Holt, $18.95), it looks today like a lot of other places. "People do aerobics, drive German cars, and own condominiums at the beach. They get HBO from the cable or the dish. They go to Europe. Drink wine. Eat sushi. Read *The Wall Street Journal*."

But something fundamental—and fundamentally distinct—survives under this veneer of superficial change, survives and prevails, and gushes to the surface every November when Alabama and Auburn, the state's two largest universities, meet in Birmingham to play a football game. (Of course, calling Alabama-Auburn a football game is like calling kudzu a green plant. Or the Bear a coach.)

Written from the perspective of a loving (and knowing) son wise enough to keep his distance, *Alabama Showdown* takes us beyond the sidelines, through the weekly lunches where the football societies meet to the hunting camps of onetime greats, from the offbeat coaches' shows to a Thanksgiving dinner of turkey and pigskin at a boys' home, run by a former 'Bama end. In the process we learn the history of the game, and of the many characters that contributed to the legacy, particularly Bear Bry-

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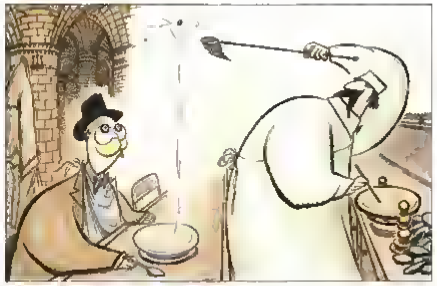
Esquire
Man At His Best

ant, whose ghost dominates the book just as it dominates Alabama football to this day. The action is propelled by the ever-approaching showdown, which, as the book opens, is only a few weeks away.

As is supposed to happen when a good writer takes on event-as-metaphor, *Alabama Showdown* transcends the realm of college football without losing sight for a minute that the game *is* the thing, and so reveals the soul of a region through its *X*'s and *O*'s ●

THE SEASONED COOK

The Two-Minute Oyster



There are times when it's a relief to know that the rules are wrong. You can split an infinitive. You can wear white in winter. And you can eat oysters in other than the R months. At one time, there was a reason for rule number three: before the days of refrigeration, shellfish could go bad in the warmer months. It *is* true that during the spawning season, from May to August, oysters lose some of their brininess and turn milky—but as long as they're correctly treated, you can eat them all year long.

If you have any lingering doubts, try getting a seat at New York's Grand Central Oyster Bar and Restaurant at noon on any weekday of the year. Located at the lower level of Grand Central Terminal, this subterranean seafood palace has been serving the finest fruits of the sea to a sellout crowd since it opened in 1913. Once you've finally found the place (a feat best accomplished by asking at least three commuters), eschew the more polished ambience of the red-and-white-checkered-tablecloth dining room—if you want to learn what oysters are all about. Make straight for the oyster bar and take a seat at a stool; already, the flinty tang of salt air and the delicate, tobacco aroma of fresh fish is as subtly alluring as a morning breeze off Penobscot Bay.

Facing you on the other side of the counter is a platoon of cooks stationed behind a row of stainless-steel double boilers used for stews and pan roasts. Off to the right are piles of unshucked oysters, glinting like wet coals in their bed of crushed ice. A sign overhead announces the varieties—steely Kent Islands, mild Cotuits, pale Apalachicolas from Florida—at least six or seven kinds on any given day.

After an appetizer of frosty half shells, you're usually ready for a variation on the theme with an order of oyster pan roast, a specialty of the restaurant. If, as Swift once declared, "he was a bold man that first eat an oyster," the pan roast bears all the hallmarks of several generations of self-confidence, that is, knowing how to move expertly from the raw to the cooked. It's one of those straightforward and robust seafood preparations that will always lie directly north, whichever way the compass of food trends points.

But if you want to see how it's made, you've got to watch closely. Two minutes is all it takes from the time the order is placed until it arrives rosy and steaming at your side. In one of those instances of perfect two-handed coordination, the way a cardsharp deals out a new deck, a cook will start spooning ingredients into the double boiler—butter, oysters and their liquor, seasonings, and cream—simultaneously whisking the entire concoction together like mad. Then he'll place a slice of toast in your bowl, ladle on the soup, a swirl of paprika, and it's done: a center circle of plump bluepoints, meaty and nut sweet, floating atop a voluptuously mellow broth sparked with the gentle burn of chili sauce that smolders through it all, like a vein of fire not yet doused by the sea.

Overcooking and too high heat will both toughen the oysters and eventually curdle the cream. To avoid these problems, use a double boiler and make sure that the water doesn't touch the bottom of the upper pan during cooking. For each serving, place one-quarter cup of oyster liquor, one tablespoon of unsalted butter, one-quarter teaspoon of paprika, a dash of celery salt, one teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce, and one-and-a-half tablespoons of chili sauce in the double boiler over boiling water; whisk constantly until the mixture is smooth and combined.

Now it's time to pop a slice of bread into the toaster so it will be ready for the soup—a slab of crusty sourdough or a slice of pumpernickel. Spoon eight freshly shucked oysters into the broth and stir briskly just until their edges curl—about a minute and a half. Stir in one-half cup of light cream and heat just to a boil, when you'll notice small bubbles starting to form along the rim of the pan; immediately remove the pan from the heat. Place the toast in a soup bowl; pour on the pan roast. Top with a tablespoon of additional unsalted butter and a sprinkle of paprika.

—Elizabeth Sahatjian

FIRST-RATE

The Rise of the House of Arkham

Publishing's haunted house isn't much to look at: a brown, wood rectangle framed in front by a limp clothesline strung between two oak trees that have the girth of turn-of-the-century burghers. Then again, Arkham House Publishers Inc., of Sauk City, Wisconsin, isn't a company to put on airs. Not that it doesn't have reason.

Since 1939, Arkham has played a small but pivotal role in American letters, spawning and preserving some of the most scarifying and innovative horror and fantasy fiction ever written. For a time, it was the only publisher the discriminating horror fan could turn to to get his flesh goosed.

The oldest publisher in the U.S. devoted solely to the fantastic, Arkham has published the first books of such prominent fantasists as Ray (*The Martian Chronicles*) Bradbury, Robert (*Psycho*) Bloch, Robert E. (*Conan*) Howard, and H. P. Lovecraft, the latter considered by many literary critics to be the most influential modern writer of the ghastly. Arkham House has also cast a spell of influence on a host of current horror writers, including, yes, Stephen King.

An Arkham book is made to bury its owner. Its binding is sewn and it's printed on fifty-five-pound, acid-free paper. Strip away the dust jacket and you have a sturdy black hardcover eight inches tall and five and three-eighths inches wide,



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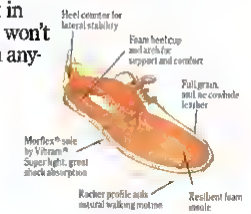
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ESPRIT

Susan Powell
Editorial Assistant Age: 24

Paul Bennett
Architect, Age: 26

I'm very calm although some say I'm a doormat. I always thought I'd come to New York and be a model. My first job here was in a cappuccino cafe where strange people kept dropping in from a crazy house across the street. Now I'm in fashion magazines to stay. Paul and I are both from Texas. I want to go back one day and he doesn't. I like him because he's not into traditional roles and he just bought an accordian. He's also a ringer for a Brooklyn league basketball team. On weekends we go to Dominican restaurants in the Bowery, and take pictures of small parts of buildings with his box camera. When we're old, he'll be spouting wisdom, and I'll be planting flowers.

with gold letters embossed on its spine. A few Arkham volumes standing on a bookshelf create a formidable uniform library of horror and fantasy—say, the dark side of the Library of America.

But some readers want more than a few Arkham volumes. They crave them all. That's why some out-of-print Arkhams fetch prices of more than $100, and a few are valued at closer to $1,000. A copy of the company's first book, *The Outsider and Others* by H. P. Lovecraft, sold last year for $1,700. Booksellers estimate a complete Arkham mint collection of some two hundred books, which could have been bought new for less than $1,000, would cost $10,000 to $15,000 today. To put the collector's market in perspective: Ray Bradbury says Arkham paid him $500 to publish *Dark Carnival* in 1947. Today, one copy of the book—sometimes called the *Dubliners* of horror fiction—often sells for more than $500.

Arkham House's architect was August W. Derleth, a naturalistic novelist of some repute whose first obsession was the supernatural tale. When Lovecraft died in 1937, Derleth and fellow writer Donald Wandrei decided to publish a memorial Lovecraft volume under the imprint of Arkham House—Arkham being an imaginary Massachusetts hamlet in Lovecraft's stories. Soon after that landmark book, Derleth assumed control of Arkham, free to build publishing's haunted house.

Not that it was profitable. At one point, the story goes, when all lines of credit had dried up for his publishing ventures, and Arkham's fiscal health was critical, Derleth secured a bank loan for a house. Apparently, he neglected to tell the bank that the house was Arkham House.

Like Derleth, Arkham's current editor, James Turner, publishes books he thinks "should be preserved in permanent editions." Turner's lineup of twentieth-century Poes is impressive. It includes such award-winning fantasy writers as Michael Bishop (*Blooded on Arachne* and *One Winter in Eden*), Charles L. Grant (*Tales from the Night side*), Joanna Russ (*The Zanzibar Cat*), and Russell Kirk (*The Princess of All Lands*)—that's the same Russell Kirk who wrote *The Conservative Mind*.

And there are more writers who want to do an Arkham book than Turner can possibly accommodate: the company publishes but four books a year.

"One of my goals before I was forty was to have an Arkham book," says Charles Grant. "And when the editor came to me and said he wanted a collection, I almost died."

—Dana Jennings



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER JOHANSKY

THE DRINKING MAN

A Rustic with Taste

In the democracy of drink, one-party rule is regarded with suspicion, and rightly so. A harmonious pluralism, marked by ever-expanding diversity, remains the Platonic ideal in this version of *The Republic*. The imperial pretensions of Cognac, therefore, must be resisted: for all its magnificence, it is *not* the only French brandy. The rural corner of southwestern France known as Gascony fields a strong challenger: Armagnac, often called Cognac's country cousin, or its little brother. In drink as in politics, there is always another county heard from.

Actually, both designations are misleading. True, Armagnac can claim an output only a tenth that of Cognac, but the "little brother" actually predates its sibling by some two centuries. As for rusticity, Armagnac may not be able to compete with the finest Cognacs in suavity and finesse, but it has a winning swagger and panache that can make the average Cognac seem weak-willed. Armagnac is countrified in the best sense: closer to the vine and the soil, it has a heady, pungent bouquet, a fat flavor, and an after-perfume that lingers in the glass for hours, even days, exhaling scents of prune, earth, and wood. It is the other great brandy.

Armagnac derives its character from three sources: the sand and clay soil of Gascony, the unique method of single distillation, and above all from the casks in which it ages, made of tannin-rich black oak from the nearby Monlezun Forest. The pale, acidic wine of the region is fed into a copper still that allows the alcoholic vapors to pass back over the incoming wine, taking along with them more of the grape. In bygone days the still was a portable affair resembling a locomotive, and was pulled by oxen from farm to farm around the countryside. Upon distillation, the colorless *eau de feu* trickles directly into the four-hundred-liter oak casks.

As with Cognac, older is better. VSOP on the label means that the youngest brandy in the blend (there may be as many as twenty) is at least four years old. Such designations as Napoléon, XO, Extra, S.P., Réserve de la Maison, Vieille Réserve, or Hors D'Age indicate an age of at least five years, after which French law no longer applies. In practice, most firms produce a VSOP of six to ten years, a Napoléon of ten to twelve years, and a Réserve of twenty to twenty-five years. Recently a number of firms have begun to export vintage Armagnacs as well.

For a long time, nearly all Armagnac was consumed right in Gascony, an intensely agricultural region of truffles, geese, maize, and fruit, but over the past decade or so, the rest of France and now the U.S. have made its acquaintance. The most widely available brands are Marquis de Caussade, which accounts for about half of all sales here, De Montal, Janneau, Larressingle, Clés des Ducs, Sempé, and Marquis de Montesquiou. All use grapes from Armagnac's three subregions—Bas-Armagnac, Ténarèze, and Haut-Armagnac, in order of merit.

The higher-priced brandies of Bas-Armagnac (so designated on the label) show Armagnac at its finest: a rich, burnished spirit whose fine breeding sets it apart from the burlier blends. Look for Loubere, Samalens, and the elusive Francis Darroze, whose Armagnacs each come from a single vineyard and a single vintage.

Traditionally, Armagnac is enjoyed neat, in a snifter after a good meal. Just as traditional is the *pousse l'amour*, a Gascon recipe offered by the Count De Ganay, whose family, makers of De Montal Armagnac, have lived in the region for more than a thousand years. Fill a champagne flute one-third full with a chilled, preshaken mixture of two parts Armagnac to one part orange juice, with three drops of triple sec. Complete with brut champagne and garnish with an orange slice. Then lift your glass to Gascony's most famous son, d'Artagnan, whose bravado lives on in the Armagnac of his native soil.

—William Grimes

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What Every Man Should Know

Playing with a Full Deck



Some men hit a tiny rubber ball against a wall. Others don shoulder pads and slam into each other's torsos, or trudge over hot asphalt that splints their shins and springs their knees. Through the sweat, the pounding of our hearts, we ache to meet and beat our limitations. That is the essence of Sport. Each guy picks his crucible. I play poker. It's just like life: sometimes you eat the bear and sometimes the bear eats you. But win or lose, it's the only night of the week that I'm truly alive. My nerves are taut. My mind is focused. I am Man, hear me roar.

In its most satisfying form, played by a fixed cast of slugs around the same table year after reclining year, the game of poker has nothing to do with cards and money, or even, strangely, with winning and losing. No, a rudimentary form of protofriendship is closer to its sweet and preadolescent heart. In fact, if the mix is right, poker can be the best way yet invented to make and maintain male alliances on the comfortable, emotionally stunted terms most of us can understand. Over time, it may even be better than drinking.

Around our table this means each player observes certain standards that help us all feel, during game time, like prime representatives of the species.

Only the Dead Come Late: The sole thing of importance on poker night is the timely assembly of the anointed Inner Circle. My good friend Captain Hospitality was invited to sit in about a year ago and had the temerity to show up an hour late. When he did appear, he was egregiously cavalier about his tardiness. Seems it had something to do with, of all things, work. He would almost certainly have been banished in perpetuity if he wasn't such a relentlessly classy guy and consistent loser.

The Stakes Should Hurt: As a group, you can drive up the testosterone level by making sure that the evening's investment is just outside the comfort zone. "There's a hysteria-per-dollar ratio—the higher the stakes, the crazier the game," muses a friend whose wildly incoherent style of play has earned him the nickname Deaf, Blum, and Blind. After a horrible bath, the resulting bout of depression and self doubt can be almost literary. And quality introspection is so hard to come by these days.

A Man's Style Is His Castle: The legendary players mark their games with a broad brush. Doc is the riverboat smoothy drawing rubes into his net. Red bets like a terrorist, but only when he doesn't have the cards. The Catbird, on the other hand, leans back when he's poised to win, betting with an air of futility, stroking his moustache in dejection right up until the moment he purrs, "Oh. I think I got you beat," and lays down his royal flush. Obnoxious, huh? But don't let your bitter-o-meter soar. Your style, if you're lucky, is probably just as irritating, especially when you win.

Drink or Else: Beer is to poker what wine is to Communion, so pop some suds and keep it on hand, even just to nurse. A prissy Perrier diminishes the prevailing karma.

A Woman's Place Is Not in the Home, or on the Phone: The game should be a haven from domesticity. Guys at play see themselves as lusty pirates in search of booty. It's hard to maintain that illusion when you're in the next room mewling, "Yes dear, I'll pick up some cream on the way home."

For God's Sake, Bring Enough Dough: Playing close to the edge of insolvency is no fun, and you won't play very well either, for to win with consistency you must be able to bluff with aplomb. It's impossible to be crafty and devious when the tabletop before you gleams like the Bonneville Salt Flats at noon.

If You Do Run Out of Money, Borrow Like a Man: Don't filch or wheedle a dollar here and there. Yank out your checkbook and requisition enough to get you through the upcoming campaign with brio. There's little more depressing to a gang of desperadoes than the specter of a companion whining, "I need another three dollars from somebody."

No One Cares About Your Three-Picture Deal, Unless the Pictures Are Face Cards: Sure, a lot of business chat goes down at games; it's the background noise that keeps things from being conducted in grunts, squeals, and total silence. But don't get embroiled in a discussion of the six-figure package you have cooking with your people on the Coast. It can make folks kind of hate you, even when you lose.

Don't Cry Over Spilled Chips: Excessive honking about lost cash is crass. So complain about your life, your wife, or, of course, your cards, but pay your debts and shut up about it. There was this guy who came to our game once, let's call him Fred. Fred lost prodigiously in the first hour, but we didn't hold that against him. It was only when he began to mutter, "Well, there goes my kid's new sneakers," and then, "There goes my car payment," that we began to resent his presence. "It took all my self-control to keep my hands off his throat," growled the guy we call Papa. Some things should not be defiled, and the right of one man to bankrupt another is one of them.

Play with Passion. By 2:00 A.M., deep in our endgame, the contest resounds with rumbling curses and piercing cries of shame and grief. Chips are hurled with ferocity beyond the center of the table. Winners cackle; losers stew. We are all engaged, and there are no small feelings. Take the time, for instance, that my buddy Mr. Bicoastal dropped $140 on two consecutive hands of acey-deucey. As he sank to his knees, six guys lurched from the table, convulsed in paroxysms of what can only be called glee. It was great.

It's Not Whether You Win or Lose, and Blah Blah Blah: Yeah, yeah, sure. But if you're dropping wads of green every time you sit down to play, it may be hard to generate that bright ring of friendship that makes the game worthwhile. In that case, you might want to find another form of male validation. Something just as intimate, psychologically demanding, and emotionally shallow, a sport that may be played sitting down with a beer in one hand and a cigar in the other.

If you find one, let me know. I'll play. —**Stanley Bing**

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by Bob Greene

CONVENTION OF THE LOVE GODDESSES

After twenty years, a phone call leads to a weekend of bliss



PHOTOGRAPHS—BOB GREENE

AT 1:30 A.M. in a Dallas nightclub called Ravels, I danced with five gorgeous college co-eds to the old Monkees song "Last Train to Clarksville." Normally I do not dance at all—it feels vaguely uncomfortable—but the five co-eds had insisted, and besides, how many times in your life do you get the opportunity to dance with five women at the same time?

The song ended and we sat down. Some young Texas studs—in their mid-twenties, considerably more youthful than Mr. Greene—came up to our table and asked the co-eds to dance. One by one, the co-eds said no thank you.

The Texas men looked at the five women, and then looked at me.

"The odds are kind of on your side," one of the Texans said.

"It's a long story," I said.

BACK WHEN I was in college, in the mid-to-late Sixties, certain sororities had the capability of breaking men's hearts. The top sororities possessed such power over male students that many of us were reduced to quivering jelly just by looking at the sorority houses, never mind the young women who lived inside.

And of all the sororities on campus, the Delta Gammas—the DGs—held a special place in the pantheon. The Kappas may have been the perfect all-American girls. The Thetas may have had spunk and verve. But the DGs were the love goddesses.

If you thought of sororities in terms of old-time movie stars, the Kappas were Grace Kelly, the Thetas were Katharine Hepburn. The DGs, though—the DGs were Marilyn Monroe. Male students would have signed over their first five years' postuniversity earnings for a chance to shine the DGs' shoes, much less the chance to go on a date with a DG. If you were a normal campus man—not the football captain or the president of the student senate—you had no prospects of ever actually going out with a DG. Seeing them in class, or walking around the campus, was the best that you could hope for.

The names of the most famous and beautiful of the DGs on our campus were whispered with rhapsody and awe. Fluff Crawford, Janis Bingay, Jane Werner, Helen Bennett, the legendary Paris Singer. . . no names in America had the power to immobilize us that those names did, and no names seemed so ultimately unreachable.

Last year I committed some of these reminiscences to print in my newspaper column. I had no idea of what was to follow.

I WAS sitting in my office one afternoon when the phone rang. The caller was Maggie Watkins, who identified herself as the executive director at the Delta Gamma international headquarters.

Maggie Watkins said to me that the DGs were having their national convention in Dallas, and that they had decided, on the basis of what I had written, that I might make a good keynote speaker for the opening night.

I was busy on the day she called, fighting a deadline, and when she told me the date of the speech I said that my schedule was all jammed up just then. I couldn't do the speech.

I hung up and got past my deadline, and then it occurred to me.

The DGs had invited me to Dallas and I had said no. Two decades may have passed since those days on campus, but the idiocy of my actions was not lost on me. Finally, after all this time, the DGs had summoned me. And I had turned them down.

I called Maggie Watkins back.

"Exactly what goes on at the DG convention?" I said.

"Well," Maggie Watkins said, "we rent out a whole hotel. There will be 1,200 DGs and you."

The next sound was that of my telephone dropping to the floor.

WHEN I arrived in Dallas the temperature was approaching 95 degrees. I rode out to the Registry Hotel, and as soon as I walked into the lobby I realized that this is what heaven must be like.

The place was jammed with DGs. DG alumnae of older generations, DGs of my generation, and hundreds upon hundreds of DGs currently in college. All of them, at one point in their lives, had been DG love goddesses. The 1986 co-eds in the hotel held that title currently. I looked around me, and I wanted to cry for joy.

I went up to my room and immediately fell into a shock-induced trance.

THE BANQUET that night started at 8:00 P.M. Its purpose was to honor the Delta Gamma Foundation, a charitable arm of the national sorority that does a great deal of fundraising to help the blind.

I sat there looking out at DGs—so many DGs that those at the end of the room were beyond my view. At the lectern, various officers of the Delta Gamma Foundation were giving heartwarming reports on the good deeds that the foundation had recent-

MY ROUTINE WAS SIMPLE. I WOULD WALK UP TO A WOMAN STRETCHED OUT ON A CHAISE LOUNGE AND SAY, "ARE YOU A DELTA GAMMA?" IF SHE ANSWERED YES, I WOULD SAY, "I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE YOUR PICTURE."

ly accomplished. I knew I should be listening, but I kept looking at the crowd and thinking: If my old college roommates could only see me now.

When it was my turn to speak, I got up and looked at all those DGs again.

I couldn't help myself.

I leaned into the microphone and said, "Hello. My name is Bob Greene. Room 1538. . ."

HERE'S A tip for any of you who are called on to be the keynote speaker at a future Delta Gamma convention.

Don't tell the story about your amusing visit to the Trojans factory. It might not go over so well.

FOR A long time, I wanted to win the Pulitzer Prize. I thought there could be nothing in the world more thrilling than to have that Pulitzer certificate hanging up on my wall.

But now I am content. I have something better. It was passed up to the head table, handwritten, and here is its exact text:

> Dear Bob
> The Mississippi Delta Gammas cordially invite you to their private party in Room 508 after the banquet, to sample some real Southern hospitality. Before you refuse. . . remember. . . Mississippi has had more Miss Americas than *any* other state in the U.S.A.!!

FROM THIS point on, the weekend becomes a blur. I remember sitting in the lobby bar with a group of DGs who had come to Dallas in a custom van outfitted with a television set so they could watch their favorite soap operas. I remember making note of the fact that many of these young women had not been born when I was in college salivating over the Fluff Crawford–Paris Singer generation of DGs. I remember being approached by a group of DGs who had rented a stretch limousine and were going out on the town, and wanted to know if I wished to accompany them. I remember saying that I would have loved to, but that there was a physical force that would not allow me to leave this hotel filled with DGs. I couldn't go anywhere.

I remember the five beautiful DGs approaching my table and asking me to go to the Ravels nightclub to dance with them. Ravels was a part of the hotel, so I said that I would accompany them. On the way to the nightclub one of them asked me if anything was wrong, and I said no, I always had tears in my eyes.

AN INVESTIGATIVE reporter can learn a lot of things at a convention like this if he pays careful attention. For example. Toke Vandervoort, the president of the DG chapter at Louisiana Tech University? Her real first name is Catharina. True story, and you read it here first. Breaking news like that kept happening all weekend, and I was always there to cover it.

FLASHBACK FOR a moment:

We're at the banquet. This is before I made my speech. A dignified-looking, white-haired man named William F. Gallagher is introduced. He is the executive director of the American Foundation for the Blind, he is blind himself. He is on hand to receive a check from Delta Gamma.

He stands at the lectern and tells a story about life in New York City, where he lives:

"It was a terrible winter afternoon in Manhattan," he says. "A mixture of snow and rain. I got onto a crowded bus, and there was no room to move. The door to the bus closed, and I found myself standing on the bottom step of the bus.

"Finally a woman called out: 'I would hope that someone would stand up and give this poor blind man a seat.'

"And another woman's voice yelled back: 'I don't see why I should. I'm eighty-six years old and he's a good seven years younger than I am.'"

IN THE nightclub, a DG from Kansas University asked me if I had been serious about what I had said at the end of my speech.

What I had said was:

"Some people go on vacations and visit botanical gardens. Some people go on vacations and visit wildlife preserves."

I had held up a camera.

"I'm not much of a tourist," I had said. "I never take pictures. But this weekend is an exception. I want you all out at poolside tomorrow, because I'm here to take pictures of DGs."

The co-ed from Kansas said, "Did you really mean that?"

"I'm afraid I did," I said.

THE NEXT morning I was sitting by the swimming pool, waiting for the onslaught of DGs. They started arriving at about 10:00 A.M.

I will offer you this as the gospel truth: there may be other groups of Americans who perform certain functions better than collegiate DGs, but nobody is better at arranging chaise lounges in the sun and perfectly laying beach towels over the plastic tubing.

THE GENERATION gap reared its ugly head early. A swimsuited DG from Bowling Green State University—a senior named Amy McLean—started talking with me about the news business.

"I like watching Tom Brokaw," she said. "He reminds me a lot of my dad."

FOR MOST of the day I took pictures. My routine was simple. I would walk up to a woman stretched out on a chaise lounge and say, "Are you a Delta Gamma?" If she answered yes, I would say, "I would like to take your picture."

Now, several different thoughts were going through my mind.

The first, of course, was that I was a total degenerate.

The second was that I felt like a combination of Jack Nicholson in *Carnal Knowledge*, flashing his slide show of women he had known onto a home movie screen, and of a certain scene in the novel *Portnoy's Complaint*, in which young Alexander Portnoy stands around an ice-skating pond, looking at all the beautiful, flawless young blondes and realizing that they live in a totally different world than he does, and that they always will.

But my main thought was this.

The idea of walking around the pool all day, taking pictures of the DGs—I realized that when it finally appeared in Esquire it might seem mildly amusing, or at least bizarrely interesting.

But the point was, at the moment I was doing it, it wasn't a story in a magazine. It was the real world, and I was a grown man with a camera, spending a day in the only life he will ever live taking pictures of college girls and then thanking them for their time. And as odd as it seemed, I didn't feel apologetic at all about it. In fact, I had waited twenty years for just this weekend.

I WENT back into the hotel and called my parents in Ohio from a pay phone.

"How did your speech go, Bobby?" my mother said.

"Well, Mom," I said, "they didn't seem to like my story about the Trojans factory."

"They didn't?" she said. "I've always liked that story."

"I always have, too, Mom," I said. "But some of them didn't like it."

TWO DGs from Indiana University were standing on a balcony area. Downstairs, in the lobby, were a couple of male Indiana University students who had driven all the way to Texas to see the co-eds. They showed the weariness of their long trip, and now they were asking the two DGs to come downstairs and join them.

"I'm sorry," one *(Continued on page 53)*


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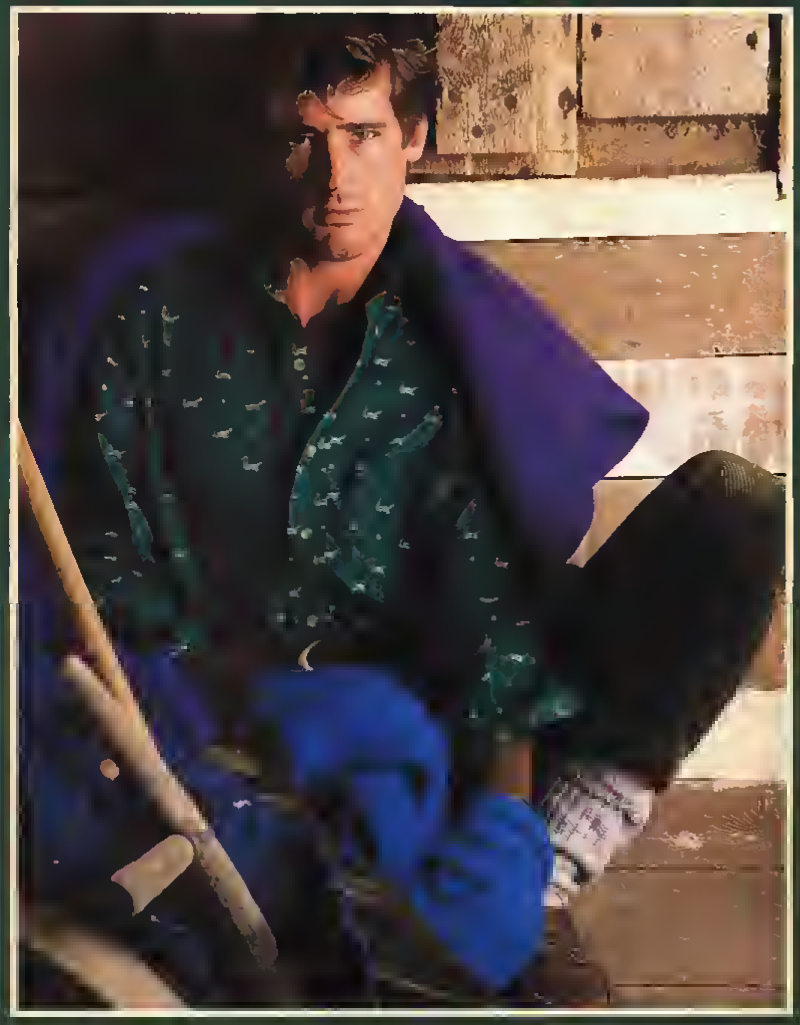
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of the DGs was calling down in a sweet voice. "We have meetings all day and all night. I just don't think we can get together."

The young men, their journey wasted, turned and walked out of the hotel.

"Do you think they're angry?" one of the Indiana DGs said to the other.

A DG alumna who appeared to be in her sixties said to me, "Mr. Greene, I thought that story you told last night was disgusting."

"The Trojans story?" I said. "I told a lot of stories. That was only one story."

"It was gross," the woman said.

"Well, my mother likes it," I said.

AT ABOUT 11:30 P.M. one night, there was a knock at my door. I opened it a crack and saw a co-ed standing there.

"We just finished our meeting, and we wanted to hang out," she said.

She walked through the door, and then another co-ed after her, and then another co-ed after her. It began to look like one of those scenes at the circus, with the clowns continuing to emerge from the Volkswagen. Finally there were seven of them in the room.

Not knowing what else to do, I left for a few minutes to go down the hallway and get some ice. When I returned, a DG named Betsy from Cornell University said, "You had a call when you were gone."

"A call?" I said. "You answered my phone?"

"Yeah," she said. "I said, 'Mr. Greene's suite,' and they asked if you were in, and I said no, and they hung up."

"Do you have any idea who it was?" I said.

"It sounded like an older woman," Betsy said. "Are you married or something?"

THE ALUMNAE were beginning to get testy. I would be riding in an elevator, and one of them would say to me, "Are you still here?"

I would attempt a jovial laugh and say, "Why? Do you want me to leave?" I would then laugh again.

And there would be silence.

SO I got ready to leave. I packed my bag and rewound my film into its canister.

I ran into two young women from the hotel's concierge staff on my way out. Their names were Karen McCullough and Nan Austin, and they were bent over a piece of paper. I asked them what it was.

"It's the rules for the Battle of the Hotel Superstars," Karen McCullough said in a Dallas drawl. "I'm entered in the string-along, the sack race, volleyball, and the egg toss."

You could try to invent your life, but the real thing is often sufficient.

BOB GREENE is a contributing editor of Esquire magazine



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by Gary Legwold

HOW MUCH DOES IT HURT?

Newfound pain scales and "pain centers" now help athletes answer the question more safely



ILLUSTRATION-JULIAN ALLEN

WHILE RUNNING the 1978 Grand Valley Marathon near Grand Rapids, Michigan, Dennis Rainear was shot in the head. He was cruising at a six-and-a-half-minute-mile pace, hoping to better three hours and qualify for the Boston Marathon, when—at the ten-mile mark—he was knocked off his feet by a terrific blow to the top of his skull. Rainear thought perhaps he'd been whopped upside the head by a brick or a baseball bat. He looked around—nothing, just runners chugging away.

He had a lump on his head "just like in the cartoons, with the big goose egg sticking up," recalls Rainear, now a lawyer in Midland, Michigan. He remembers some bleeding and stinging and a violent ringing in his ears, but he "kept on running because, by golly, I wanted to break three hours."

The pain numbed, but at eighteen miles he became "wobbly," and at twenty-two his eyes were 'acting independently"—he couldn't focus. He finished at three hours and nine minutes. His wife helped him to the medical tent, but the examining physician was stumped. "As he peeled back the skin and tissue, he noted what he thought was a piece of something metallic, shiny. Finally he said, 'All I can figure is you've been shot.'"

Emergency-room X rays showed he had indeed been fired upon, by someone unknown to this day. Surgeons removed a .22-caliber slug that Rainear has kept along with a hefty scrapbook of newsclips.

Rainear's story of running past pain has a twist to it, to be sure, but it is not all that rare. Races often turn up tales of men, mostly, on a mission. One of Rainear's brothers once ran himself unconscious chasing another brother in a race. One runner finished Boston in 1982 to find he had run on a broken leg. And in the 1982 Twin Cities Marathon, Dick Hunecke had a heart attack and still finished the race.

Hunecke, then a forty-four-year-old management consultant from St. Paul, was, like Rainear, trying to qualify for Boston. He felt pains down his arm while training, but thought they were muscle spasms. At the twenty-four-mile mark his arms went heavy, his body numb. Something was wrong. It took him two and a half hours to finish the last two miles, but he managed a final kick so his children could see Father finish with a flourish. At the finish, he collapsed in his children's arms, crying with relief. The next day he entered the hospital for three and a half weeks.

These stories illustrate how athletes regard pain in sports: we don't, usually. Certainly not before a twinge, and even when limping we regard pain with annoyance, something to run through as we would crepe paper spanning the entrance to a stadium full of fans chanting our name.

Disdain for pain begins early. The playground answer to pain is "shake it off," as if it were a leech. As you grow older, you learn that the better you shake—play under the influence of—pain, the further you can go. In fact, overcoming pain is almost a fundamental that pros need to survive. Alberto Salazar ran with stress fractures. Mantle, Orr, Hogan, Namath, Koufax, Conigliaro, Roche, Reed, Walton—you can hardly find a pro athlete who hasn't played with severe pain. "I didn't know if I was going to be able to play again," was how Larry Bird of the 1986 NBA champion Boston Celtics put it last spring, alluding to the back pain that almost sidelined him for good in 1985.

IT'S ALL very personal—the reasons athletes run through pain. Pride, a lathered-up coach or parent, and a few locker-room clichés are often enough. But pro athletes also do it for our entertainment and applause. Says Rainear: "My story would probably have never made the news had I quit. But having finished the sixteen miles with a bullet in my head made that story and caused it to survive to this day."

We want to see talent, sure, but we also want swagger and sacrifice—obvious sacrifice. "It's been inculcated into our competitive system that you don't quit unless you absolutely have to," says Dr. Stan James, an orthopedic surgeon in Eugene, Oregon, whose clients include Joan Benoit-Samuelson, Mary Decker Slaney, and Salazar. James says any other attitude is not "well accepted by the American sports public. They want someone to put blood on the line."

Dr. Philip Gildenberg, a Houston neurosurgeon who chaired the scientific program committee of the 1985 general meeting of the American Pain Society in Dallas, tells this story: Not long ago, a psychologist used college football players as subjects to study pain thresholds and pain tolerance. A heat-producing light was shone directly on the subjects' foreheads at varying intensities. They were to push one button when the light got hot and an-

MY STORY WOULD PROBABLY HAVE NEVEH MADE THE NEWS HAD I QUIT," SAYS MICHIGAN MARATHDNER DENNIS RAINEAR. "BUT HAVING FINISHED THE SIXTEEN MILES WITH A BULLET IN MY HEAD MADE THE STORY SURVIVE TO THIS DAY."

other when the heat became intolerable.

The study was a bust because nobody pushed the first button when things warmed up. "And most of the players would not push the second button until they had actual tissue damage," says Gildenberg. "So it was a sign of being on the football team to walk around the campus with a burn mark on your forehead. That pretty much illustrates the team mentality regarding pain. I'm not giving up when I hurt because the guy next to me is not giving up. Of course, the guy next to him is saying the same thing."

Learning about the mentality regarding pain, as Gildenberg puts it, keeps the members of the American Pain Society steeped in experimentation. Established in 1978 and part of the sixty-nation International Association for the Study of Pain, APS now has 1,250 members. Neurologists, anesthesiologists, nurses, psychiatrists, dentists, rehabilitation therapists—just about anyone who's into pain professionally—gather each fall for the annual meeting. Last year they heard papers on such topics as pain perception, headaches, stress management in pain control, pain programs in a cancer hospital, opioids and pain control, lower-back pain, and pain throughout history.

Partly in response to athletic confusion about pain, more than fifty "pain centers" have opened since 1970 in the U.S., offering varying degrees of sports-medicine counseling, and diagnostic and rehabilitation services. On the West Coast, for example, Dr. James Garrick, of the sports-medicine staff of Saint Francis Hospital in San Francisco, tends a growing number of weekend and serious amateur athletes in the "in-between" stages of injury, before activity can be heartily resumed. On the East Coast, Dr. Gerald Aronoff heads the Boston Pain Center and the North Shore Pain Center in Peabody, Massachusetts, both of which tend to injured athletes. Most of their patients, however, suffer from chronic or recurring pain that is not athletics related.

There is no across-the-board answer to how much pain an athlete can safely endure. This lack of definition is especially troublesome in the area of overtraining, where, fortunately, recent advances in research have been made. Researchers at the University of Texas, for example, are applying a simple test, involving two hormones plus an enzyme released into the blood when muscle is damaged, to determine when males are overtrained.

DR. ROBERT P. Nirschl has been frustrated for years because communication on pain is so primitive. Nirschl, assistant professor of orthopedic surgery at Georgetown University and medical director of the Virginia Sports Medicine Institute in Arlington, developed a diagnostic tool that helps athletes describe their pain more accurately. He has used this homemade five-phase scale in handling more than 3,500 cases of tennis elbow.

- Phase 1: stiffness and soreness after activity
- Phase 2: stiffness and soreness persist but subside during activity
- Phase 3: some pain during activity
- Phase 4: constant pain during the day, even without activity
- Phase 5: pain at night, even without activity

In phases 1 and 2, Nirschl advises, work to improve strength, endurance, and flexibility of the sore area, take aspirin, and perhaps change activity or rest. In phase 3, reassess activity: you are flirting with the pathological changes leading to phases 4 and 5. Tenderness, swelling, and local heat to the touch in phases 3, 4, and 5 mean inflammation. See a doctor: damage to tendons, muscles, or ligaments is looming.

Nirschl recognizes that pain is personal and that his scale does not fully address the intensity issue. But, he argues, patient and physician rely heavily on pain feedback for direction in preventing overuse injuries and in athletic rehabilitation. Thus, for effective treatment, they must speak the same language.

Former Wimbledon champion Stan Smith first suspected he had tennis elbow in 1975. After a frustrating year and a half of hearing conflicting medical advice from four physicians, Smith contacted Nirschl, who taught him the five phases of pain. Thereafter Smith would call Nirschl, sometimes at odd hours from overseas tournaments and exhibitions, and they'd talk phases. Phase 3? Take it easy. Phase 4? Withdraw from a tournament or commitment.

Nirschl's pain scale could answer questions on such overuse injuries as runner's knee, shin splints, and shoulder bursitis and tendinitis. I hurt my shoulder trying to get something extra on a throw from right field to third base. Should I stop playing? Yes, if I'm at phase 5. Knee and ankle pains in running and basketball—do they mean I should cool it for a while? No, I'm at phase 2. Am I pushing my shoulder or ankle rehabilitation too hard by swimming? Maybe, if I'm at phase 3.

One problem with such a scale is that it may put too much power in the hands of the patient, who often wants to play at any cost. In medicine, part of building a good history is not to "lead the witness" or vice versa, certainly, but to establish an objective analysis of the problem. It is part of the considerable art that remains in medicine despite all the technology.

More than a few pain specialists, however, are suspicious of the simplicity of any scale that measures degrees of pain. Gildenberg declares: "Pain defies a strict definition." Wilbert Fordyce, a clinical psychologist with the University of Washington in Seattle and president of the American Pain Society, says, "I understand why someone looks for a neat formula, but I don't think there is one. And I'd be afraid of it if somebody came up with one."

Both Nirschl and Fordyce point out that such a scale seems to sidestep the psychological side of pain, which adds a great deal of complexity to the issue. For example, Fordyce says, athletes must distinguish between pain and suffering. "Suffering really means pain with the anticipation of dire consequences. If you don't anticipate dire consequences, you don't suffer as much. You may hurt as much, but you don't suffer as much.

"It exaggerates it only a little bit to put it this way: people hurt about as much as someone important to them thinks they do. And that important person may be themselves, or in the case of a football player, the coach or a teammate. Please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying that if a running back gets flattened by a 280-pound tackle, he doesn't have pain." But, he adds, sometimes the pain stops once the next play is called.

This all tends to go around and around after a while. The main point about pain in sports in the late 1980s is this: think about it. Your body is saying something to you. Go beyond the clichés and the pain scales, because it is *your* pain. But don't ignore the good advice that is increasingly available in clinic or health-club settings.

Pain is a teacher. It is a built-in tutor that helps us reach our capabilities and then, finally, accept them, such as they are. Accepting extraordinary hurt was hard for Huneke, who still runs but passes on marathons. "The heart attack changed my life," he says. "I now know what my limits are. I was very lucky. I've had more pain since the heart attack than before, because I've become more cognizant of the rhythm of my body and what's going on. While that's a positive experience, it's also humbling because you get in touch with your mortality."

As far as Dennis Rainear is concerned, he will simply never hear a starting gun in quite the same way as before.

GARY LEGWOLD, a former editor of The Physician and Sportsmedicine, *lives and writes in Minneapolis.*

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SAFETY NETS ARE A PROBLEM MOST PARENTS WON'T WANT TO DISCUSS.

Few financial relationships are as burdened by emotional complexities as those between children and their aging parents. The powerful psychological commitment of parents to provide for very young children can pale before the experience of seeing those who sustained you as a youth pass into a state in which they themselves are in need of sustenance.

The majority of older people—and their children—remain dangerously unaware of certain financial facts of life for the elderly: that a single year in a nursing home can cost $40,000, for instance, or that Medicare *does not* cover 98 percent of this sort of expensive long-term care. Attorneys and financial planners specializing in the affairs of the elderly report that older widows often do not know how much money they have, where the assets are parked, where the safe-deposit box is kept, or even the name of their family lawyer. With all the sophisticated financial products around that free individuals to fine-tune investments to their needs, each time a bank or a thrift goes under, the people seen weeping outside the closed doors on the evening news invariably have gray hair. A study sponsored by the Federal Reserve Board indicates that while 53 percent of those over sixty-five have old-fashioned savings accounts, only 18 percent hold a money fund, 4 percent have bonds, and 3 percent have trusts—and they remain, as always, the chief patsies for our resident financial fimfam men.

The main caretakers of old people in America are not government agencies, as members of the Reagan administration would have you believe, but members of the family. Eighty percent of long-term care is, in fact, provided by family and friends. Some 80 percent of women aged eighty or older live with their children or less than ten minutes away. Preliminary findings of an ongoing study by a retirement-advisory firm in New York indicate half of those people currently considering retirement for themselves are financially responsible to someone other than a spouse—usually a parent rather than a child.

There are numerous services, funds, insurance products, legal maneuvers, and sources of expert advice available to people growing older, but the most casual communication about such things between children and parent can be so difficult and painful as to be impossible. The noted American gerontologist Dr. Robert Butler remembers that when he first began to study and work with the elderly, he was shocked to find that they were much more forthcoming about sex, sickness, and even dying than they were about money. "I realized that the old adage about money being synonymous with power was particularly poignant for older people. Old people begin to lose their physical power, social power, and influence, and they are loath to give up more power by revealing all or ceding control to their children." One prominent Chicago attorney, who is eighty-three years old himself, notes that he hasn't had a single aged client who has turned to his or her children for assistance. "It would be like announcing that you're old," he says. "It's like throwing in the sponge." And there are many children who don't want to hear the facts of their parents' financial state lest their own extended childhoods suddenly come to an end.

As psychologically traumatic as the financial role reversal may be, the consequences of a medical tragedy or the sudden incapacitation of a parent dictate taking the plunge. Some accountants and estate planners advise approaching an aging couple by saying, "Dad, how would you like us to take care of Mom if something happens to you?" Others suggest there should be a checklist that includes the location of the will, safe-deposit box, key to the box, and a list of the numbers of all asset accounts.

Unstated fears may be eased if parents are assured from the start that they will remain in control. Preplanning should be envisaged as nothing more than putting in place systems and safety nets. Even a "durable power of attorney" that hands over control of a parent's money in the event of his or her inability to manage it can be held by an attorney or trusted friend so that the power is not abused.

Once the subject is aired, there are a host of strategies and new products to discuss. If the cash that exists as savings happens to be in a passbook account, turn the folks on to the special mutual funds operated by the American Association of Retired Persons in concert with the hotshot investment-advisory firm Scudder, Stevens & Clark. After Scudder's family of seven funds opened up in 1985, over $1.8 billion poured into largely high-yield fixed income funds in just eighteen months, primarily from bank accounts. You have to be over fifty to get in, there is an unusually low minimum start up, the prospectuses are easy to read, and the telephone operators are trained to speak clearly and to be patient.

"Medigap" insurance should be considered to help cover the often-large deductible and consurance outlays that attend acute medical care. Law firms, accountants, banks, and more recently, large brokerage houses are all equipped to help construct living trusts—the particularly serviceable standby trusts. Codicils to wills may be written that will allow the younger generation to transmit support to its elders in a way that avoids both the opprobrium and tax consequences of outright gifts.

Advisers in this growing subfield of financial planning are beginning to push for two-tiered financial planning for the later years. The first stage is directed to a time when both retirees are alive, in good health, and desirous of spending money on luxuries like travel. Reserves are set aside during stage one for stage two, when one spouse is gone and the oth-

er might be in need of the sort of care that costs much more than a year at Princeton. It turns out that while only one in twenty Americans over sixty-five lives in a nursing home, one in five people over eighty lives under institutional care.

The logic of purchasing insurance against the potentially catastrophic costs of long-term care is currently under discussion in public and private circles. If you think about it, insuring against long-term $30,000- or $40,000-a-year bills that might wipe out parent and children alike seems far more logical than traditional life insurance. But as yet, the big insurance companies have been reluctant to sell long-term-care insurance, and public-sector discussions sound just like the ones that preceded the advent of acute-care health insurance and Medicare.

An awareness of the social choice inherent in the whole issue of old-age dependency and responsibility is particularly important for baby boomers. If medical advances continue and the average retirement age of sixty-two persists, the boomers are going to be... well, *old* for a tremendous portion of their collective lives. There will be some fifty million retirees by the year 2030—a figure twice the size of the entire sixty-five-and-older population today. Though the children of these retirees may be brave, sensitive, and caring enough to involve themselves in their parents' finances, there will be fewer children around to share in the aid and comfort. Some projections indicate that the productive capacities of the economy of that future will not even support social-assistance programs as they now exist. If the emotional, moral and political aspects of money and growing old are ignored now, and precedents are not constructed, there may well be some sad and lonely times ahead for the grandparents of the twenty-first century. One way to begin the difficult process of facing the problem is to bite the bullet and have a chat with Mom and Dad.

—Donald R. Katz

Business Travel

Are Ticket Brokers Taking Off?



ILLUSTRATION: PAUL COX

The people who place those ads in the Sunday business section offering to buy frequent-flier mileage awards are the same ones who place those ads in the travel section offering to sell first-class tickets at a discount. They're called ticket brokers, and they're one of the more interesting mutations in the evolution of the airline industry. For the most part, they're also perfectly legitimate.

What the ticket broker wants to purchase is not an actual ticket or a frequent-flier coupon, neither of which can be transferred after issuance. He's looking to buy the notification form the airline sends after you've passed a mileage milestone, and he'll usually send you a check as soon as you've made a deal over the phone. You sign the form and mail it to him; he files it away until he has a customer, usually a vacationer who wants a pair of first-class tickets at a cut rate. If your mileage can be redeemed for the buyer's ticket, you or the broker redeems your award for a coupon in the buyer's name. The airline mails the coupon to you, you mail it to the broker, he gets a ticket issued for his buyer, and the transaction is complete.

The airlines claim to hate the brokers, and they probably do—but not enough to put them out of business, which they could do in a second simply by making all mileage awards nontransferable. The problem for the airlines is that their most valuable customers are obviously the ones who log the most flights—and the ones most likely to have excess mileage credit they'd rather redeem for cash than travel. Making it impossible for them to do so invites them to switch to another airline's bonus program... and the rest you can figure out for yourself.

Travel agents also hate brokers—at least the agents who aren't using them do. More and more agents are finding that by buying first-class tickets from brokers and reselling them, they can earn far more money than they would on simple commissions, and still provide customers with savings. Considering the sorry state of the travel-agent industry, it's a trend that could catch on very quickly—and if it did, that might just spell the end of mileage awards, or at least transferable ones. The airlines didn't invent the first-class cabin so that people could fly in it at coach prices, and there are signs—most notably suits brought by both American and TWA charging the Coupon Bank with illegal activities—that the airlines may crack down on the buying and selling of mileage.

Until then, though, if you decide to deal with a broker, remember these tips from a recent article in *Frequent Flyer*: A broker will buy your 50,000 miles, but if you can hold off on selling until you've reached 75,000 or 100,000 miles, you'll do better. The extra mileage means your award can be redeemed for first-class rather than coach, and first-class seats are what the buyers want. Unfortunately, there are no set prices for awards, and the number and variety of factors contributing to pricing are so Byzantine that they make predicting commodity futures look simple. Be prepared to call brokers in several states (offers sometimes vary geographically) before making the sale. Prices also change according to season: spring is the best time to sell, summer is also good, and late fall and early winter are worst. If you feel better having it all in writing, mention that fact up front. Many brokers will issue standardized sellers' contracts.

If you're purchasing a ticket from a broker, bear in mind the many steps involved in the procedure and the fact that the U.S. Postal Service is a key participant. Buy at least a month, preferably two, in advance.

The airlines like to place travel restrictions on bonus-award tickets, so make sure the broker tells you what they are before you buy. If the broker wants you to fly under someone else's name, hang up. And once you have the ticket, never, never, never tell anyone connected with the airline that you bought it from a broker (which is virtually the only way they can find out). The airlines may be ambivalent about penalizing the frequent-flier sellers of mileage, but they often show little hesitation in penalizing the infrequent-flier buyers. No matter how little you paid for the ticket, if it's stamped void, it was no bargain.

—Glenn Eichler

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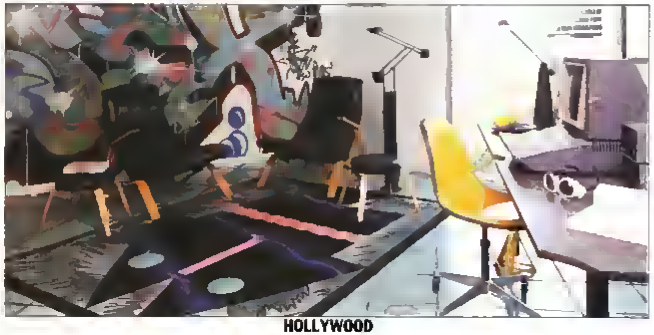
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Real Estate
At Home in the Office

With more and more people working out of their homes each year, the home office is no longer an oxymoron. For those willing to sacrifice the mutual asylums afforded by separate areas of work and play, it can be a rather efficient and convenient alternative. The coffee is probably better. And the commute is hard to beat.

—Lawrence J. Gallagher

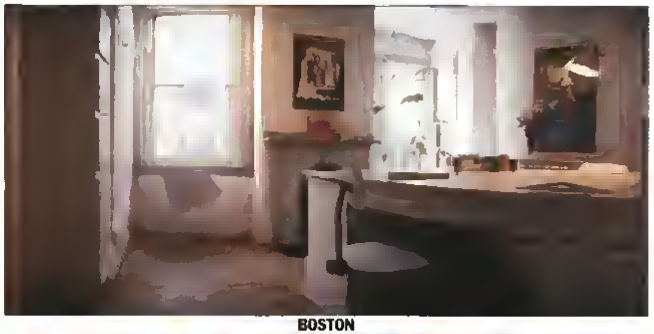


HOLLYWOOD

"Ingmar Bergman meets Laverne and Shirley" is how the owner describes the combination of Danish modern and American kitsch in his office. To achieve the desired mixture of immaculateness and liveliness, the entire floor was stripped down to the concrete and covered with obsolete turquoise paving tiles. The table, at which the screenwriter/director does most of his work, is fashioned from the slate of an abandoned pool table, supported by four $3.50 car jacks. The fireplace was done in matching cadmium yellow and flat black. Ezz and Kiz, two local Malibu surf-punks, were commissioned to provide the spray-paint mural. The house was renovated in its entirety; this room ran the owner about $10,000.

BRIAN A. MURPHY/BAM CONSTRUCTION, ARCHITECT

PHOTOGRAPH • TIM STREET-PORTER



BOSTON

The owners of this apartment didn't have any rooms to spare, so when they had this one converted into an office, they didn't get rid of the bed, they just hid it. The top of the plywood drafting table folds down to reveal a queen-size bed. The legs of the unit and the wall in back of it provide plenty of storage space for their drafting materials. The outer room was designed to complement the studio; it serves as both a conference room and a library/living room after business hours. The woodwork around the connecting doorway, designed to match the cabinetry of the inner room, provides additional storage space. The total cost of the renovation was $5,000 for both rooms.

ANGELI/GRAHAM, ARCHITECTS

PHOTOGRAPH • JOHN GOODMAN



NEW YORK

One challenge of designing a home office is getting beauty and utility to work together in the same space. The owner of this loft didn't want the clean modernity of her photographic studio to disturb the more antique style of the rest of the apartment. The separation was achieved by constructing a mirrored, foldaway partition in front of her studio. The insides of the doors are cookie-cut to fit assorted pieces of equipment. Solid wood shutters on all the windows, a skylight with an electrically controlled cover, and overhead track lighting allow the owner to adjust the light in the studio. The opposite corner serves as an office, with a couch, desk, and floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. Cost: about $30,000.

JOHN OCKENGA & CO. WOODWORKING

PHOTOGRAPH • RICHARD FLYNN

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The Strategist

She's the Boss



Frankly, I don't know what to think. On the one hand, there was Annette, my very first boss, a fireplug of a woman who smoked like a chimney, drank fellow executives into aphasia, and was not above biting off heads bigger than her own, let alone smaller. One day she was Glinda the Good, dispensing affection. The next she laded housework upon our shoulders like Cinderella's stepmommy. When pissed off, which was often, she was capable of challenging one's ego in a dangerous and, well, maternal way. She was without question as bad as any male boss in the march of time, and when she was fired for sheer nastiness there was whistling in the halls.

And then there was Elaine. In addition to business matters and office gossip, Elaine enjoyed kibitzing at length about politics, child-rearing, and catering firms. There were flowers in her office, okay, but she was tough enough when she had to be. She didn't often have to be. You didn't like to say no to Elaine. The day she left us for significantly greener pastures, the entire corporation mourned and felt rejected. I've never seen so much kissing, hugging, and sniffling on the floor. She was valued in a way that no man below chairman could hope to be.

Women make great bosses except when they don't. In this respect they're no different from men, except they are. First of all, the stakes tend to be higher. "A woman boss has more of a personal involvement with her people than a male boss does," says a woman boss I know. "When the woman is a together person, it beats having a male boss—there's more nurturing, more loyalty, more caring. But when a woman is messed up, or a workaholic, or neurotic, she inflicts more personal expectations, obligations, and *mishagaas*. Whatever you have, it's going to be more intense."

Most men, sadly, are ill-prepared for the new and fearsome task of expressing anything but jocularity at the office. To manage his woman boss, the thoroughly male worker must draw on reserves of feeling and interpersonal skills he never before needed, or thought he possessed. This may be done by playing any combination of the following roles:

The Good Soldier. "My boss Pauline manages through intimidation, lying, and manipulation—all the traditionally male characteristics," says Ken, director at a bank heavy with female talent. His tale is typical. According to Corinne Kuypers-Denlinger, vice-president at the business trend-watching Naisbitt Group. "These are driven women who mimic what they perceive to be the successful male role model—tough, aggressive, authoritarian. The *new* woman manager is more comfortable being intuitive, nurturing, supporting." If your hard-edged woman boss has yet to discover the new, softer model, deal with her as you would any other autocrat: attention, and ready for action. You'll have to be twice the woman she is—every day.

The Loving Son. "I've seen a lot of women bosses who are sort of maternal, and that is, as we know, pure power," says my pal Bob, a senior copywriter. "They want to know how you're doing with your family, or whether your cat is still sick, or how the whole You is feeling." If you can make Mom happy, the rewards are deep and wide. "You didn't want to disappoint her, or break that thing in her," Bob recalls, "because when it came to nut-cutting time, you knew she'd go to the ends of the earth for you." Most maternal bosses are satisfied, by the way, with an intensely personal confidence now and then. But don't tell her anything you wouldn't tell your real mother.

Mr. Congeniality. There comes a time, the walrus said, to speak of many things, most of which, as a guy, you will know little about. In search of the perfect schmooze, you may find yourself delving into such typically feminine arcana as manicurists, footwear, designer cheese, and, of course, human relationships. Stretch those conversation muscles. Console yourself with the thought that, if you reported to a male, you would be talking about the year the Jets won the Super Bowl or lost it, over and over again. And when it comes down to it, this year's hemlines or the Forbishers' nasty annulment can be a lot tastier.

The High School Sweetheart. A little recreational flirting can be a pleasant way to pass the day and add a certain piquancy to your working environment, so indulge to the limits of propriety. But don't get bamboozled into thinking it's going to get you anything more than a naughty thrill. "An attractive woman boss can con you into feeling like you have a special relationship with her that nobody else has," warns Rick, a financial analyst who had a professional infatuation with his former supervisor. Reliance on this titillating bond carries its own peril, as Rick found out when a promised promotion failed to materialize. "You think to yourself, 'I thought she really liked me, and it turns out I'm nothing but a pathetic underling with a schoolboy crush,'" he sighs, still wounded after all these years. So flirt if you will, but don't be a putz. Remember: she's the boss.

Mr. Cool. Where classic male authority employs the steel fist, women have an equally potent weapon: tears. Not long ago, my friend Ralph had a salary review with his female boss. When the number came down, it was several grand less than he was expecting. He recalls the rest of the incident with fondness. "I told her, very matter-of-factly, 'I do want to say I'm disappointed with this amount.' She started to sob and said, all teary, 'Well, I'm disappointed in *you* for being disappointed!' I then asked her, almost like a therapist would, 'Why are you crying? What is there to cry about?' She got up and fled to her private washroom. It was a dispute over a strictly professional issue, and I resented her injecting so much emotion into the situation. I was not going to let myself be manipulated." Ralph didn't get the extra money, of course, but so what. Some things are more important than money. Like pride.

No matter how many late-night chats you indulge in, how much tenderness or support you and your boss offer each other, never forget that she is your superior and must be obeyed. More than that—she's a *now* kind of woman, ably juggling a bewildering array of functions at home and in the workplace, forging a complex existence undreamed of by her sisters of yesteryear. Taking orders from such a woman is easy. I've been doing it since the first day I met my wife, and I've sort of gotten to like it. **—*Stanley Bing***



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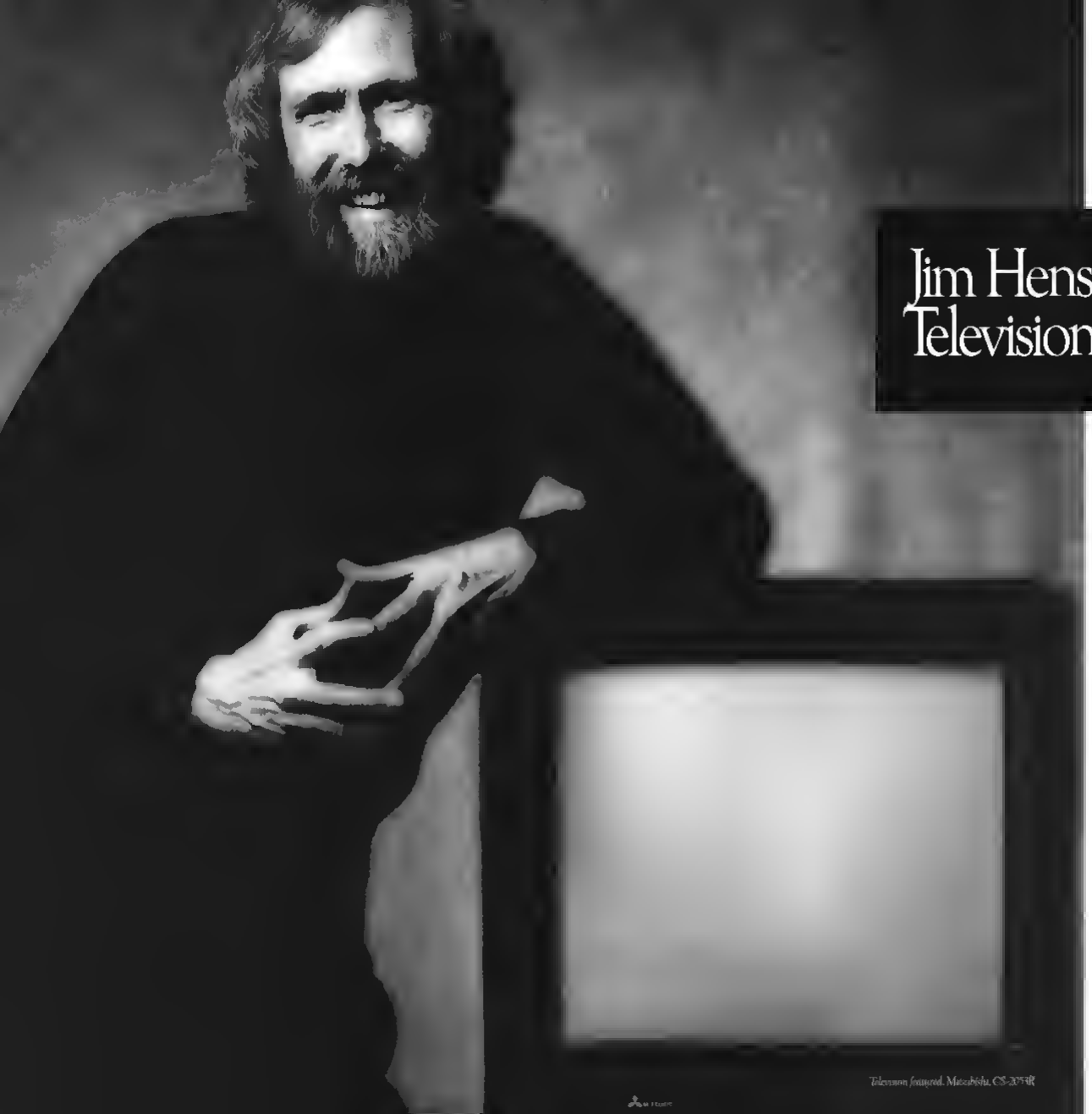
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Jim Henson Gives Television A Hand.

Jim Henson has achieved extraordinary audience and critical approval from every medium he's had his hand in. Educational TV, *Sesame Street* Network TV, *The Muppet Show.* Film; a trio of Muppet movies, *Dark Crystal*, and *Labyrinth*. His insightful imagination, expressed through an enduring cast of creatures, artfully exposes the very best in people and media alike.

"I spent a summer traveling through Europe meeting other puppeteers. That was when I first realized it was an art form... the sort of thing a grown man could do for a living."

"Sesame Street surprised everybody, the impact it had on the culture and all. It wasn't like you had to do anything dramatic to do a very good job."

"I think it's important that movies be about something, so that there is that substance to be discovered."

"Frank Oz, who does Miss Piggy, builds layers and levels of character. He knows her background, what kind of painful childhood she's had. Her humor comes from the pain."

"If our 'message' is anything, it's a positive approach to life. That life is basically good. People are basically good."

The vision of people like Jim Henson challenges the manufacturer to develop componentry capable of capturing their art in all its subtlety and nuance. Equipment like the Mitsubishi 2053 Monitor/Receiver with full-square Diamond Vision picture tube shown here.

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Insurance

Are You Too Tough to Cover?



Do you suffer from hypertension or have a chronic bad back? Or is your profession—race-car driving or snake-milking—considered a risky one? If so, you may be one of the millions of Americans of all ages who have trouble obtaining standard individual health, disability, or life insurance. If you have any of a large number of health problems, or a dangerous hobby or job, you may be sold "rated," or "substandard," insurance. Such contracts usually cost more (from a few dollars to 500 percent or higher) and may be less comprehensive than regular policies. Worse yet, you may have trouble obtaining any insurance at all.

Out of fear of being turned down, some people are tempted to gloss over or lie outright about a medical problem. But this could prove a costly error. If you were to take ill or die during a policy's contestable period—usually two years—an insurance company might not have to pay benefits under a health or disability plan, and might only have to repay your life insurance beneficiary your actual premiums plus interest.

What can you do if you are not eligible for group coverage and are afraid most agents will run away from rather than hound you?

First, try the normal route of applying for insurance through a regular agent or broker. Changes in longevity and medical care are constantly altering assessments of risk. Not long ago, ten years could have elapsed since you suffered a heart attack, yet your chances of obtaining life insurance would have been slight. Now it's possible to secure insurance two years after an attack.

If one of the larger companies does turn you down, or offers you a policy with a high surcharge, ask your agent or broker to obtain quotes from other companies. Just as regular policies differ from company to company, so does substandard insurance. For instance, one insurer may consider a forty-five-year-old with blood pressure readings of 140/90 as a standard risk while another might slap the same applicant with a 50-percent surcharge.

The kind of insurance you want to buy will also influence whether an insurer considers you too great a risk. For instance, Mutual of Omaha, the nation's largest underwriter of individual health insurance, will not issue an individual major-medical policy to a diabetic, but with certain limitations (including exclusion of disability due to the disease itself, and coverage limited to five years instead of until age sixty-five) will sell the same applicant a disability policy. In general, life insurance is easiest for high-risk individuals to obtain. But depending upon one's condition, it also has the highest surcharges—usually between 125 and 500 percent.

Substandard health policies usually have drawbacks. First, they may cost more. Second, preexisting conditions are usually excluded for at least the first twelve months. Deductible clauses may also be less generous than in regular policies, so check carefully. Even with the drawbacks, though, it may be difficult to obtain coverage with many health conditions. But depending upon where you live, you may have one or two good options.

- If you reside in Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Tennessee, or Wisconsin, you may apply for health insurance through your state's high-risk plan. Premiums are generally between 100 and 150 percent higher than normal coverage. A bill considered by Congress last summer (Access to Health Care Act of 1986) would provide for such high-risk pools in all fifty states.
- Many local Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans have open enrollment at certain times of year, when they admit individuals irrespective of health with or without a premium surcharge or waiting period.

If, despite your best efforts, you are rejected for coverage, or only receive offers with high surcharges, do not give up hope. For many high-risk individuals, the best solution may be to have your agent or broker contact an impaired-risk specialist. These are brokers agencies that specialize in problem insurance. Almost every major city and every state has at least one. Walter Robbins, an impaired-risk specialist in New York, maintains that obtaining coverage is simply a matter of shopping aggressively for almost every client there is a right product. What he does is package a client in such a way that all the medical information is presented in the best light possible.

Except in the case of certain special policies, once you obtain your policy, a company cannot apply a surcharge should your health deteriorate. But, if you start out with a substandard contract, remember, your rates can go down if your condition improves.

—Peter D. Lawrence

Financial HOTLINE

TRACKING YOUR PHONE CALLS

If you've heard one too many celebrities tell you their long-distance company is the best way to phone home, turn off your television. The best way to start saving is to write or call the Telecommunications Research and Action Center or the Center for the Study of Services, two nonprofit groups that are aiding consumers to select the lowest-cost long-distance phone company for their needs. If you already have a service, switching to one tailored to your specific needs could reduce your monthly bill by 20 to 30 percent. For $35, TRAC will send you a computer analysis of a representative phone bill that lists how much your long-distance bill would be with each of the national "big seven" carriers. CSS also analyzes regional long-distance carriers; its fees are tied to the amount of your phone bill, and range from $10 to $75. For information, contact TRAC, P.O. Box 12038, Washington, D.C. 20005 (tel.: 202-462-2520); or CSS, Long Distance Cost Comparison Department, 806 Fifteenth Street NW, Suite 925, Washington, D.C. 20005 (tel.: 800-441-8933).

GETTING YOUR VAT BACK

Now that fewer Americans are braving international travel, bargains abound in Europe's narrow streets and quaint boutiques. But before you consider a shopping spree, remember that those low price tags won't seem so sweet once the 5- to 20-percent value added tax (VAT) is tacked on. VAT refund forms usually take months to be processed and are hard to cash. Banks charge $7 to $15 for the service, and sometimes require you to wait the two or three months it takes to collect the funds from overseas. But there's a faster and easier way: send your foreign-currency check to the New York Foreign Exchange. On the day of receipt, the NYFE will mail you a U.S. check for the VAT amount. There is a $1 to $2 fee, but it's well worth it. Write the New York Foreign Exchange, 26 Broadway, Suite 767, New York, New York 10004.

A VAULT OF ONE'S OWN

If you've been betting that the neighborhood burglar won't hit your home—and if he does, that the tax deduction will help compensate for the loss—you've been playing a bad hand since 1984. Only losses in excess of 10 percent of your gross annual income now qualify for a deduction. The several grand that isn't covered could be lost down the fire escape in one night—or used to buy a home safe. Sales have become "a smart and affordable move for people with more than $5,000 worth of valuables to protect," says Richard Krasilovsy of New York's Empire Safe Company, the largest independent safe retailer in the nation. Should you plan to squirrel away jewels and documents worth under $25,000, plan on spending between $700 and $2,000 for a good burglar-resistant home safe. If you want both fire and theft protection, it will cost upwards of $1,500. Locksmiths and hardware stores carry less expensive fire-resistant models, but most can easily be cracked with a crowbar. For more information, write the Empire Safe Company, 433 Canal Street, New York, New York 10013.

256K FOR UNDER 1K

It may not be as glamorous as owning an Apple or an IBM, but it's cheap. Hyundai, the South Korean firm that brought over the bargain-basement Excel subcompact car, has done it again—this time it's an IBM-compatible computer for $788. Before turning up your nose, check out the standard monochrome monitor, disk drive, and 256K memory. The Korean PC is being sold by most mass merchandisers and will be hitting the stores this fall.

—Jennet Conant

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The Entrepreneur

The Riches in Rags



THE RAGMEN OF CHELSEA PEDDLE THEIR OWN KIND OF SOFTWARE

PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN GOODMAN

Eight years of business-school courses never taught Dennis McGurk how to sell rags.

Known as the ragmen of Chelsea, Massachusetts, on the outskirts of Boston, McGurk and another Irishman named Ed Callahan run Industrial Wiper Supply, a business that turns tons of old shirts, sheets, and undies into $2 million worth of rags a year. It seems just about everyone depends on their company. Their two thousand clients range from a major defense contractor that makes MX missiles to Rolls-Royce dealerships, from Harvard University to King Arthur's Lounge, a strip joint in downtown Chelsea.

"It's a lot of fun. Rags are very near and dear to people," says McGurk, who keeps the backseat of his Mercedes filled with samples. "Naturally, selling rags is beneath some people. They have to sell computers. But we approach it as an art: the imagination is the limit in this business."

Five years ago when Coca-Cola's bottling plants needed rags, for instance, the pair conducted a tour of the operations and recommended their standard grade: colored underwear #2. For TWA's cleaning crews, it was assorted pajama tops. And when the Renoir exhibit opened at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, only their top-of-the-line rag would do: baby diapers. White, absorbent, and lint-free. "People don't realize the value of old diapers. They're like gold," exclaims McGurk. He pays next to nothing for them and turns the diapers over at $3 a pound.

Actually, McGurk and Callahan are only the latest in a line of great Chelsea ragmen, a legacy that includes Louis B. Mayer (as in Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), who headed off to Hollywood after making his first fortune in the Chelsea rag trade. McGurk and Callahan's twenty-thousand square-foot warehouse looks a lot like Mayer's classic rag shop. Inside the wooden floor is slippery with thousands of buttons, zippers, and stays. Under the musty fluorescent light, polka dots, paisleys, and crumbly cheesecloth rise into twenty-foot mountains that brush the ceiling. From one corner of the room, there's the noise of a radio and the voices of some half a dozen women gabbing as they work over tiny Eastman cutting blades, tossing their finished products into barrels against the walls. The cutting room might have the charm of a period restoration were it not for the irreverent rip-rip-rip of garments in the air.

When there's a rush order, like today, McGurk joins in the cutting process. He is proud of IWS's antiquated operation. "Putting together a hundred-pound bale of rags is as difficult as choosing diamonds," he says. He isn't kidding. "A lot of material can get in that looks and feels terrific, but if it's made with synthetics, forget it." McGurk squats on the chair in the midst of his workers, grabs a pair of chinos, and with the neat, compact strokes of someone doing a good card trick, turns the trousers into spanking new twenty-by-twenty-inch rags. "Fortunately, it's a low-risk business."

But in 1980, when McGurk bought the fifty-year-old Industrial Wiper Supply, he was taking the biggest gamble of his life. "I didn't know anything about rags," he remembers, "except that it was a profession monopolized by old Jewish men whose techniques hadn't changed in the last century." But spurred on by the prospect of staying a paper-goods salesman for the rest of his life, McGurk sold his motorcycle and convinced Ed Callahan, a self-described toilet-paper salesman, to join him as a partner. Together they put up $40,000 in order to leverage an almost half-million-dollar debt.

For those first few months, McGurk, now thirty-nine, and Callahan, forty-five, used everything they had ever learned about business—and then some—to survive. The two men kept the cutting room as it was, but purchased a $50,000 Qantel computer to replace the archaic bookkeeping (IWS's old owners sometimes kept track of orders on the backs of envelopes). And when McGurk and Callahan agreed to continue selling door-to-door like the ragmen of old, they also decided to hire college graduates as salesmen. Those strategies tripled the size of the original business within a couple of years.

Their second step was to develop an appropriate marketing style. "We gave each of our salesmen leather briefcases to carry a full line of rags," explains McGurk. "They went prepared for anything. If they saw a secretary spill a cup of coffee, they'd snatch the paper towel out of her hand and replace it with a rag. IWS would usually end up with the accounts for her office and the entire building."

Today, with twenty employees and a 20-percent annual growth rate, the only thing holding McGurk and Callahan back are trends in the fashion industry. The whole world is going synthetic, they say, and their business could triple again if only they had enough cotton clothes. Nowadays, they get most of their supplies from the monthly turnover of old linen and bedding at local hospitals and laundries. If they fall short on an order, the two Irishmen often resort to buying extras from textile mills in North Carolina, plundering diaper services in New York, or really getting creative. McGurk explains: "A couple of years ago, we had contracted to supply rags for a luxury hotel in Boston. Our warehouse was bone-dry. We had no idea where we'd get them." In desperation, they wandered across the street to another hotel and struck a deal to buy old bath towels for about a dollar a pound. The towels soon became rags and sold to the first hotel for double the price.

When all their efforts to locate adequate supplies fail, McGurk and Callahan will suggest their clients try a synthetic rag called Kimtex, a spongy version of HandiWipes. It's this kind of "man-made" rag that pumped $1 million in revenue into the company last year. In fact, Industrial Wiper Supply has already drawn up plans for a retail store in Chelsea that will sell both kinds of rags, as well as state-of-the-art paper products, such as disposable bodysuits for asbestos removal and the counter cloths used to mop up beer and mustard spills at the Boston Garden.

"Every day we find fifty incredible ways like that to make our business grow a little," says Dennis McGurk. "It's the essence of entrepreneurship."

—Mark Gill





Bill Heater
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Married, two children

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Single Income $35,000

Estimated Expenses
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Insurance 13,000
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Unconventional Wisdom

Upjohn's Bald Ambitions

by Adam Smith



ILLUSTRATION: DAVID LEVINE

Within the next year, a lot of men are going to be talking about hair. We are on the cusp of a revolution that, in crude, dollar terms, is going to rank somewhere between the Pill and the hair-coloring revolution for women. I am talking about minoxidil, the drug that cures baldness—or, more conservatively put, promotes hair growth. Minoxidil is now being evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration, and will probably be marketed as a prescription drug sometime in the next year. It will be sold under the name Regaine.

The hair-coloring revolution for women, of course, took place about a generation ago, and was mainly a marketing breakthrough, as it has been possible since the days of Cleopatra to color hair. But an advertising copywriter named Shirley Polykoff, working on the Clairol account, trotted out a slogan, Is it true blondes have more fun? The idea was that you could *be* a blonde—try out your blond self—and retreat if you didn't like it.

Before Shirley Polykoff, 'bleached blonde' was a derogatory term, and most women were *not* blondes. To be tan and blond is now fashionable, to be tan (or sunburned) in Europe a century ago would have been the mark of a peasant, since no one else was out in the sun. Ladies of breeding and class protected themselves with parasols, and in the courts of the Cathernes of Russia, women dyed their hair black. Shirley Polykoff's campaign worked brilliantly. Clairol—and its competitors—had a new multibillion-dollar market. Women became Summer blondes, California blondes, Sunbeam blondes, Topaz blondes—there was now no excuse to have mouse-brown hair. Other shades and hues were not neglected, there was Moonlit Brown, Honey Red, Silvery Pearl, but blond was the revolution—blond became the standard that one changed to. But the difference for men is in no mere color, it's in the hair itself.

Like many scientific breakthroughs, the minoxidil story hinges on serendipity. The story begins with the Upjohn company of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Upjohn has been in the drug business exactly a century, since William Upjohn, a country doctor, devised what he called a "friable" pill. Pills in the 1880s were so hard that they frequently passed right through the patient without dissolving; the friable pill could be mashed with a thumb. Like many nineteenth-century drug companies, Upjohn began with ointments, elixirs, and syrups, but in the early twentieth century a distinguished Yale-educated scientist named Fredrick Heyl led the company into organized medical research. Within a few decades, Upjohn was selling products that are still around: Kaopectate for diarrhea, cod-liver oil, Unicap vitamins. In the 1950s Upjohn became a leader in the sale of steroids as anti-inflammatory drugs and expanded into veterinary medicine; in the 1960s, it branched out into health-care services as well. Today Upjohn is a worldwide company with annual sales of $2 billion.

In the 1970s, some Upjohn researchers tested a white, crystalline solid called minoxidil, a generic compound whose patents had already expired. Technically, the substance was called a pyrimidine, its formula was 2,4-pyrimidinediamin, 6-(1-piperidinyl)-, 3 oxide. Its molecular weight was 209.25. Upjohn thought that minoxidil would improve cases of high blood pressure, and it was tested on groups of volunteers. The compound was successful in the treatment of high blood pressure. The test data were submitted to the FDA, the drug was approved, and minoxidil became the Upjohn prescription drug Loniten.

Some of the volunteers reported a curious side effect. They were *growing hair*—chest hair, leg hair, and scalp hair. Not all the volunteers reported this, and among those who did, not all the hair was "terminal," or normal; some of it was "vellus," or fine and downy. The hair growth didn't seem to affect minoxidil's properties in the primary area of blood-pressure control, and since the side effect wasn't harmful, the original Upjohn researchers ignored it.

The Upjohn researchers did ask themselves *why* minoxidil had this effect. It was a peripheral vasodilator—that is, it dilated

ADAM SMITH is the author of The Money Game, Supermoney, Powers of Mind, *and* Paper Money.

blood vessels that would otherwise have been too constricted to allow hair growth. Perhaps the increased supply of blood was good for the scalp. But there are other vasodilators that don't grow hair. Standing on your head can also increase the flow of blood, and headstands have not been known to cure baldness in anyone. What happens at the cellular level when minoxidil is applied to the scalp is still obscure, but Upjohn filed a report with the Securities and Exchange Commission on April 29, 1986, that detailed the testing of Regaine. It said that 65 percent of the 1,833 men tested reported "a smaller-diameter bald spot."

Male-pattern baldness is called *alopecia androgenetica*, *alopecia* meaning hair loss, *andro* referring to the male hormone, and *genetica* meaning inherited. In some genetic patterns, the hairline recedes as male hormones diminish, a bald spot develops on the crown of the head, and finally the male is left with a horseshoe-shaped band of hair around his skull. In most instances hair stops falling out when it has reached the horseshoe shape.

Baldness cures have been sold for thousands of years, and while bald heads may be considered virile by some, most men would rather have hair. So it was not surprising that word of the minoxidil tests got out. Dermatologists began mashing up Upjohn's Lonten tablets into a powder (the "friable" quality of Dr. Upjohn's pills remained), then mixing them with a base solution, sometimes cold cream. Some charged hefty fees for this, and very soon the minoxidil-mixers were not limited to dermatologists.

Upjohn heard of this in 1985 and warned there might be side effects—the FDA had approved minoxidil as a prescription drug only in specific dosage, taken internally, for high blood pressure. But a kind of gray market in minoxidil began to grow.

Meanwhile, the attention spread far beyond the usual bands of security analysts who follow drug companies, to the rest of Wall Street, which certainly has its share of bald heads. In August 1984, Upjohn sold on the New York Stock Exchange at less than ten times its anticipated annual earnings. Upjohn's competitors, Merck, Pfizer, Lilly, and Squibb—other major pharmaceutical companies—sold slightly higher in relation to their earnings. Analysts worried at the time that Upjohn's biggest earner, Motrin, an antiarthritis drug, was losing ground.

WHILE UPJOHN was counting hairs to the inch, Wall Street was counting bald heads—heads with receding hairlines, with bald spots on the crown, heads with only a horseshoe. How many of those were there? How many in the world?

But in less than two years, Upjohn has quadrupled—to a recent price of about one hundred. The other major pharmaceutical houses have also done very well, but Upjohn now sells at the highest price in relation to earnings of any major full-line pharmaceutical company.

The market value of Upjohn stock went from $1.5 billion in 1984 to $6 billion in 1986. Many of Upjohn's drugs are doing well; it has an antianxiety drug, Xanax, and a sleep inducer, Halcion, that have been well accepted. But at least some of the incremental billions in market value have sprung from *perception*, and anticipation. It isn't minoxidil, the high-blood-pressure drug, that has caused the excitement. Lonten is doing only about $40 million a year. It has been the prospect of Regaine, Upjohn's prescription minoxidil ointment awaiting approval in Washington, that has held everyone's attention.

In their April report to the SEC, the Upjohn researchers were counting hairs to the inch. And Wall Street has been counting bald heads—heads with receding hairlines, heads with bald spots on the crown, heads with only a horseshoe left. How many of those were there? How many in the world? No one knows, but the idea provides the same kind of exciting fantasy the Boston textile merchants entertained when they considered the possibilities of trade with China in the nineteenth century: if only each Chinese wore a robe one inch longer.....

Wall Street loves these factors:

- Regaine doesn't work on everybody—but nobody knows whether they are in the chosen group until they try it.
- Regaine will be a prescription drug. Thus it will have the authority of the medical profession behind it. Some of the doctors might use it themselves, and—
- You have to keep taking it! If Regaine does grow some hair for you—and you stop applying it—the new hair falls out!
- Regaine will be expensive—and very profitable.

And finally, the Upjohn company will be able to start up a whole array of over-the-counter, nonprescription products to go along with Regaine—shampoos, conditioners, and so on. They have already begun work on shampoo.

So here is what I foresee:

I see gentlemen on commuter trains and in locker rooms comparing the patches on their scalps.

I see a lot of anxious peering into bathroom mirrors early in the morning. Did it work? Didn't it work? Was that hair there before? Is that terminal or vellus?

I see medical researchers, fascinated with biochemistry, trying to figure out *why* a vasodilator will *grow hair*.

I see disgruntled alumni of Regaine—those who tried it unsuccessfully—or those who tried it and decided it was too expensive, or too much trouble for the visible results.

And I see every *other* major pharmaceutical house furiously reassembling chemical nuclei like pyridine and piperidine, trying for a formula that will have the same effect, yet safely skirt Upjohn's new patents. Sooner or later, Regaine will have a competitor.

And after a few years, society will take it for granted. Some men will have some new hair, many more will still be bald, and some will be defiantly bald, or balding, just as some women today have never been any shade of blond, in spite of Shirley Polykoff.



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Esquire

How Datsun Discovered America

by David Halberstam

In 1960 Nissan banished a rebellious executive to California. Once in the driver's seat, Yutaka Katayama took off like nobody's business

Yutaka Katayama was sent to America in 1960 to handle Nissan's first exports to that distant and pervasively rich land, not because he was a rising star but because he was in disgrace in Tokyo, and this assignment was a form of exile. What better place for a Japanese auto executive in disgrace than the world's greatest center of automobile manufacturing, where success was dubious and failure highly likely?

Katayama was a conservative man of upper-class origins, and his privileged childhood had made him somewhat different from other Japanese. For one thing, it had given him a desire for a higher level of independence. For another, it had made him an absolute car nut. His father had owned two very sporty cars, and it was Katayama's love of cars that brought him to work at Nissan. It was about cars, and he was about cars, and he not only wanted to drive them, he wanted to build them. At one point, frustrated with the politics of Nissan, he had even designed his own car, an ultralight auto for a country where gas was extremely expensive. The Flying Feather, it was called, and he and a friend put it together in the second story of a Tokyo building but couldn't get it out for a trial run. In a nation filled with laws and restrictions and inhibitions, racing around in a sports car was to Katayama the highest form of freedom.

By the late Fifties, he had fallen into disgrace with his superiors because of his opposition to the company's new, powerful, management-propelled union. Katayama, a man of the old order, was essentially antiunion. In his perfect world, managers would deal with workers in an honorable Japanese manner that reflected well on both labor and management and that accorded both sides dignity. In a slightly less perfect world where there had to be unions, management would make the decisions, and labor would go through the motions of pretending that it had fought valiantly to improve things. That kind of relationship he could understand. Labor as an extension of management was something he could not. In the early Fifties, when Nissan had been under assault from a leftist union, Katayama had opposed the leftists. That had not bothered his superiors. But his crucial mistake was to oppose the new management-sponsored union, which had crushed

This article was adapted from The Reckoning, *which will be published this month by William Morrow.*

the leftist one. That had sealed his fate.

His friends warned him to keep his mouth shut, but he never listened. When almost everyone else in middle management was joining the union, Katayama stood on the sidelines.

In 1958, desperate to get away from the company's politics, Katayama led a triumphant team of Nissan drivers through an arduous auto rally in Australia. He returned a national hero—only to find that his job had been given away to a union member. Two years later, when management asked him to check out Nissan's prospects in California, he jumped at the chance. The decision to try exporting had been partially inspired by his success in Australia, and though he knew he was being banished, he was delighted nonetheless.

As a student Katayama had been sent to America by his father to expand his horizons, and he had loved it. Now, as a grown man living in Los Angeles, he was struck again by the sense of freedom. Americans believed they could do whatever they wanted, the way they wanted, when they wanted. The lack of formality, symbolized by the absence of blue suits, cheered him. In Japan, if you were to transact serious commerce, you wore a blue suit. If you were not entitled to wear a blue suit, you wore a laborer's work clothes. But in America there was no telling what a man did by looking at his clothes.

In addition, and most miraculously, it did not seem to matter that he was Japanese, what mattered to the Americans was what he was selling and what the terms were. Was it a good deal? An American trying to do business in Japan, he was sure, would never have found as many doors open as Katayama was finding open to him. Yutaka Katayama, to his amazement, found himself more at home in California than he had been in Tokyo. Soon the American job became a permanent one. No one else seemed eager to go to America, that alien, often terrifying place, so he was placed in charge of Nissan's operations in the western United States. He sent for his family. What was supposed to have been a brief tour lasted seventeen years.

He was poor in America at first, barely able to survive on his salary, yet he knew that every dollar he spent represented real sacrifice for the company. To save money he had his regional salesman call in every day at certain prescribed hours, if the phone rang three times and then stopped, it meant that the salesman had nothing to report. It was typical of his operation.

Katayama's big problem in the early days was that the car he was selling was simply terrible, crude and underpowered. There were those who believed that Nissan, realizing how bad its car was, had declined to put the company's name on it, calling it the Datsun in America, so that if the car failed there would be less loss of face.

But Tokyo was beginning to send over engineers to modify the Datsun for American requirements, and Katayama pounced on them, relentlessly indoctrinating them in his view of the Datsun's shortcomings and the need for improvements, creating allies for the debates he was already carrying on with the home office. He worked the engineers over so hard that they called his sessions Katayama University. He thought the task ahead was much more difficult than Tokyo realized, and he had already found Tokyo very slow to accept the gravity of its problems in America.

Katayama decided the first thing to do was to study the American market and find out what it would take. He learned a number of things very quickly. The first was that he was probably lucky to be on the West Coast rather than on the East, for people in California were less fixed in their habits. The second and more important thing Katayama learned was that in America the dealer network was critical. In Japan Nissan dealers played almost no part in the selling of cars. In America they would have to be the true customers of the company. If they were strong and vital, the company might succeed.

For those he chose, he made the deal quite profitable, giving them about 19 percent of the gross profit. The American companies were paying dealers only 12 or 13 percent, which was one reason why they preferred selling large cars and why America both manufactured and sold more big cars than little. It was a habit based on the difference between 13 percent of $2,000 and 13 percent of $5,000. Katayama paid considerably more, partly because he had no alternative, but also because he realized that the only way the company could prosper was if the dealers got rich.

From the start, Nissan in Tokyo judged Katayama negatively. The home-office managers remembered his old affronts to the union, and worse, decided he had gone American. That did not bother Katayama. He was having too much fun. Even when business was awful, when the cars were bad and his prospects bleak, he had no regrets. He thought himself lucky. In Japan, where he had always been perceived as incautious and somewhat aggressive, he made enemies; in America people responded to his openness and exuberance, and he made friends. Almost immediately, and for the first time in years, he was enjoying his work. Sometimes he went house to house in the Japanese sections of Los Angeles trying to sell pickup trucks to Japanese gardeners. Many of them were among the city's poorer citizens, but they were usually sympathetic and also alert to the possibility that the pickup was a good buy.

His English was not very good; as one friend noted, he spoke a language of his own, a kind of "Janglish." But he was so winning that many Americans reached out to help him. He loved the openings of Datsun dealerships, loved the hoopla of these American ceremonies—a barbecue in Texas (he would inevitably show up in a ten-gallon hat), a fish fry in Louisiana, or a Mexican dinner in San Diego. The Americans did not call him Katayama—that was too long and too foreign—but Mr. K, and he loved that too.

Amid all the fun, he was taking careful sights on the national market. Importers, he reasoned, would have to leave the center of the country alone for a while; it was a vast, underpopulated region of great distances where people needed big cars, and that was what the American companies did best. If the Japanese poured their energy and resources into every section of the country, they would surely fail. The Japanese were wise to begin on the coasts, creating their beachheads there, slowly earning the money to spend on advertising, and only then expanding into selected areas of the Heartland. "What we should do," he told his American associates, "is get better and creep up slowly, so that we'll be good—and the customers will think we're good—before Detroit even knows about us."

In the beginning almost no one knew about them. By American standards there was virtually no advertising, just simple black-and-white brochures printed in Tokyo with florid English-language descriptions of the cars. Katayama hired a Los Angeles adman named John Parker because he was young, did not cost much, and seemed bright. When Nissan needed to shoot still photos, Parker and his family served as models. The first television commercial was shot in 1963, for a four-wheel-drive wagon called the Nissan Patrol. Hiring a friend who was an L.A. Police Department photographer and who had a 16-mm camera, Parker drove a Patrol into the canyons and shot a sixty-second ad; Parker himself was again the model. The next year they heard that Roy Rogers, the cowboy actor, liked the Nissan Patrol, and Parker asked him to do the company's first full-fledged commercial. "I can't offer you any money, Roy," Parker said, "but we'll give you a Patrol, two pickups, and all the glory a man could want." As the cars began to sell, there began to be a budget for TV ads.

Katayama was absolutely convinced that, even more than advertising, the key to success was providing service. The American market, he decided, was in some ways a prisoner of the country's wealth. The system seemed designed to produce a car that would last three or four years and that, when it began to deteriorate, would be shuttled off to a poorer segment of the population. Katayama

As head of Nissan's operations in the United States, Yutaka Katayama brought good old Japanese know-how to American needs

ILLUSTRATION • GENE GREIF



knew, though, that these Americans were potentially good customers. They included young people, elderly people, and some poorer people, all of whom badly needed durable, fuel-efficient cars.

Already Volkswagen was doing well with these customers, the ones ignored by Detroit, providing a reasonably priced alternative source of good transportation, good mileage, and good service. Katayama realized that VW customers believed they were treated better, *respected* more, than they would be if they were trying to buy at the lower end of the American lines. (Generally the first thing that happened was that some salesmen wanted to talk them into buying something grander.) VW became the model for Katayama. At that time, 1961, it seemed invincible. It was at the height of its success (in another decade it would begin to slip), and it was doing everything right, selling 177,000 cars a year, a remarkable 46.8 percent of the import market.

Of course, the first Datsun in America was a disaster. It sold for $1,616, and Katayama often wondered why anyone bothered to buy it. He had direct knowledge of the car's problems, for in the beginning his was truly a shoestring operation; if a Datsun broke down—and one often did—he sometimes ended up doing the repair work himself. If worse came to worst and the car could not be fixed, he might even lend the enraged owner his own car.

The salesmen called the Datsuns mobile coffins because of the unbearable heat inside the car. There was no real heater: the car was heated—unintentionally—by the engine all the time. The worst thing about the Datsun was that its engine was simply too small—only 1,189 cc. Even the VW's was 1,300, and the typical American cars in those heady pre-oil-crunch days were coming in with engines of 5,000 and 6,000 cc. With the Datsun's little engine, its acceleration was poor, a real problem on the entrance ramps of the California freeways. Also, the brakes were weak. That was not all. The Datsun was designed for Japanese winters, which, by and large, are milder than American ones, and the car was very difficult to start because the battery was too small and did not throw much of a charge. For the Datsuns in the more northern sections on each coast, this morning sluggishness was a major problem. In the East, the Datsuns were selling mainly to blue-collar people who could not afford better cars. These were people who got up early, when the engines were coldest and the batteries weakest. Masataka Usami, a Nissan executive who lived in Greenwood Lake, New Jersey, and whose own car would not start in cold weather, reported back to Tokyo that Nissan could not have a car that started only two out of ten times. Tokyo was not very helpful. The alleged starting problems were impossible, the home office insisted,

Tokyo would not budge. A truck was a truck, and Americans had no right to use one to drive to the office.

since it had checked and Hokkaido—Japan's northernmost island, where Datsuns started without difficulty—was just as cold as New Jersey. Usami replied that in Hokkaido those few Japanese who were privileged to own cars lovingly put blankets over the hoods every night. Tokyo asked why Americans didn't do the same thing. Usami explained that to the Japanese a car was a privilege, but to Americans it was an appliance, and they expected it to work without pampering.

Katayama's attempt to get Tokyo to upgrade and Americanize the car was a constant struggle. Even on the small matter of the floor carpets there was a problem. The Japanese tended to clean their cars incessantly and thus preferred to take the floor mat out, the better to pursue every last speck; the Americans were more casual, at best giving the floors a quick vacuuming, and they wanted the mats permanently attached, an attitude the home office found inexplicable. Whatever Katayama asked for, whether it was a more powerful motor, better acceleration, or better brakes, Tokyo resisted. What the Americans wanted above all, power and particularly styling, the Japanese were not yet ready for. In 1961, the year after he arrived in America, Katayama estimated that it would take until 1970 to get the right car for the American market, one with at least a 1,600 cc engine, real performance, and some style. He was off by a few years. The first really viable Datsun was the 1968.

What saved the company in the meantime, though Tokyo was loath to admit it, was Nissan's little pickup truck. It was small, it was inexpensive, and it exploited the single Japanese automotive strength—durability. Even more significant was the fact that, as Katayama soon learned, in western America and especially in California the pickup had a function different from the one it had elsewhere. Here it was both truck *and* passenger vehicle. Many Americans worked their small patches of farmland for an hour or two in the morning before driving off to a factory job. Some who no longer worked on the farm kept a pickup nonetheless, as if to sustain their sense of self. Other, older Americans preferred pickups because they held up well, younger ones liked them because of the image of ruggedness they projected. People who owned small companies—maybe just one or two employees or maybe just themselves, needed a pickup for work and liked the Datsuns because they were cheap and tough.

The pickups sold right from the start. They sold without advertising. They sold because the men and women who came in to look at them could sense that they were well made. They sold because the word of mouth was phenomenal. These funny little trucks, owners told their friends, lasted forever, and nothing ever went wrong—they were a real buy. The sales were so good that Nissan's West Coast office soon had twice the total volume of the East Coast's. In 1963, for example, a critical year when Datsun was just beginning to get a foothold in the American market (late that year it moved into the top ten importers in terms of monthly sales), the western division outsold the eastern 2,781 vehicles to 1,151. Of the western division's sales, 1,597 came from small trucks.

Tokyo was ambivalent about this desperately needed success. Nissan had wanted to arrive in America and be classy and sell cars and make a reputation; it had not wanted to come and sell trucks. So when Katayama kept talking about the need to improve the trucks, management refused to listen. Katayama was trying to tell the home office that more than half of these Datsun trucks were used for commuting, that they were, in effect, being used as cars, and that the market would explode if Nissan simply upgraded them a little. But Tokyo would not budge. A truck was a truck, and Americans had no right to use one to drive to work, particularly to offices. That was wrong of them. The trucks should be used for carting heavy goods. Katayama suggested certain changes that would permit owners to convert them rather readily for family use, and again Tokyo vetoed him. Families had no business riding around in pickup trucks. Katayama sometimes wondered how many more pickups might have sold if Tokyo had listened.

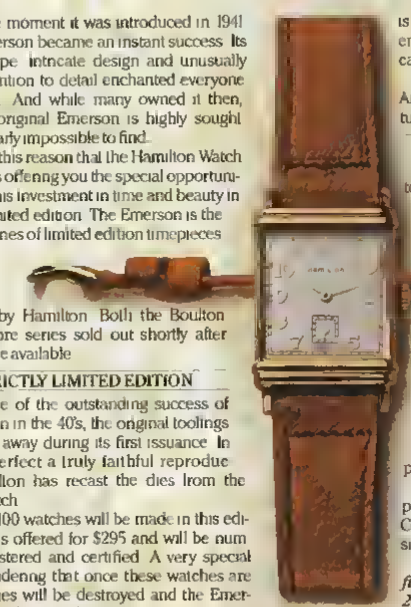
What also helped carry the company in those days was Takashi Ishihara. Like Katayama, he was in a form of genteel exile, although he was a far more senior and powerful figure in the company, the heir apparent at one time to the president, Katsuji Kawamata, himself. Ishihara was export manager of Nissan in the fall of 1960, when he was made president of the American branch. Though for a time their purposes coincided, there was no love lost between him and Katayama. There was, after all, an ocean between them, because Ishihara chose not to live in America. To Katayama he seemed just one more of that legion of insular Japanese businessmen who looked upon America simply as a place from which to take something, either knowledge or technology or perhaps some hard currency.

Nonetheless, he was an extremely powerful ally for Katayama. For though they might differ on specific tactics and ambi-

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tions, and though Katayama might be more willing to adopt a truly American business style, they were as one on the central goal, which was the success of the American enterprise. That gave Katayama a lever he otherwise sorely lacked. For Ishihara's troubles with Kawamata notwithstanding, he was *of* the company as Katayama was not. Though his background was in finance, he was still considered more of a car man than Katayama, and his recommendations had a great deal more impact. Once, early in the course of the American venture, during a visit to California, Ishihara took Katayama to dinner. The question of Tokyo's reluctance to accept suggestions from America hung heavily in the air. It was very hard to make Tokyo respond to America's needs, Ishihara agreed. "I am the only one who can do it, who can push it through," he said, "and I can do it only from Tokyo. Always remember that."

There was soon ample evidence of it. Nissan had capitalized the American company at $1 million. To the Japanese that seemed an enormous amount of money. There were strict governmental limits on how much a company could spend overseas, and they were sure $1 million would last five years. But America turned out to be a terribly expensive place. Breakfast at a hotel could cost the unwary traveler several dollars. Advertising on radio and television was like burning money. Even arranging dealerships turned out to cost money, for lawyers were expensive. There was no way to save. Within two years there was only $100,000 left of the original $1 million. In late 1962 Ishihara went back to the board, hat in hand, and asked for another $500,000. There was no real challenge to him. The board voted the money rather readily, and he felt very little heat. But the American operation continued to be costly, and results remained hard to come by. A year later he had to go back and ask for another $500,000. This time he knew he was going against the wishes of the board. Some board members suggested he had been careless and that for so much money there ought to be more to show. Ishihara replied politely that he was still confident they could attain their objective, that Nissan could make a car that would do well in the American market. Indeed, he was willing to bet his career on it. If we don't make it with this request, he added, I will resign from the company.

"I am Katayama of Nissan," he would say when arriving at a hotel or a meeting, and that was enough.



PHOTOGRAPH: CURTIS KNAPP

The eyes on him at the meeting, he thought, were as cold as stone, and he could even see some pleasure in the faces of some potential adversaries. The board again gave him $500,000, but it left no doubt that he was not to come back again.

It was, he often reflected later, a very close call. In 1964 the company began to show a profit, about $200,000. Years later, when Ishihara was president of Nissan and was frequently congratulated on the brilliance of its performance in America, he was always mildly amused, for he knew how near they had come to failure.

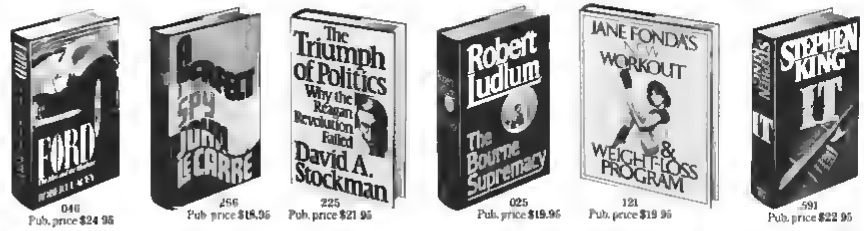
To Katayama, Ishihara was simply someone in Tokyo who had responsibility for America. He was an asset, an ally, but not a colleague. To most of the people in America who had any encounter with Nissan's American operation, it was still Katayama's company. He was there every day, impassioned, pushing for dealers, trying to sell cars. He often delivered them to the dealers himself, because it was cheaper and because it gave him a chance to hear what they were saying.

Katayama had nothing but contempt for most of the other Japanese businessmen he met in America. When some of the younger ones came to him for guidance, he scorned their insularity. Too many of them, he said, when they came to America, knew only the map of Japan, and thought only of the people in the home office, and trusted only other Japanese. Sometimes, out for a meal with a few American friends, he would spot a group of Japanese businessmen seated nearby, five or six of them, no Americans. "Look at them," he would say, 'afraid to be in America." Worse, when Japanese like these talked about Americans among themselves, they still used the hateful Japanese word for "foreigners," *gaijin*. They did not go out and get to know the market, they sat in their offices being very Japanese, trying not to make mistakes, trying not to be different. Timid rabbits, he thought.

"I am Katayama of Nissan," he would say when checking into a hotel or arriving at a meeting, and that was enough. He was the head of a company just as Lee Iacocca and Pete Estes were heads of companies, though of course he made about $25,000 a year or about one thirtieth of what they made, and soon about one thirtieth of what some of his own dealers made. This did not bother him. The other auto executives traveled with great retinues, and there was always someone to meet them at the airport, someone to get them a drink, someone to light a cigar, someone to make sure that when they went to their favorite restaurant they got their favorite table. He preferred to travel alone; he could learn more that way. He could meet people on planes and in restaurants and bars, and not be separated from them and the truth by underlings eager to protect him from the truth. He ventured forth constantly, savoring and studying the country. There was not a sports event in Los Angeles that he did not find interesting, and he became a devoted football and baseball fan. He was a great hiker, and there was no mountain worthy of the name in the West that he did not climb. He became a devoted fisherman and he worked the rivers and the lakes in the Pacific Northwest, fishing there with his dealers and their friends. He was a good amateur painter, and wherever he went he took his paint kit and sketched the American landscape. Each year he would take the sketch he liked best and make it into his Christmas card. By the end of his tour, his Christmas list had ten thousand names. Nothing, his friends thought, told

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more about him than this; here was a man who had come from a country where there was no strong tradition of Christmas cards, and he had compiled what surely must be one of the nation's longest lists. Few Americans understood the modern American Christmas-card ritual as well, or practiced it as personally.

He was a man, said his longtime friend and speechwriter, Mayfield Marshall, who wanted nothing less than to shrink the Pacific Ocean. Like many Japanese he loved flying kites, and those Americans who worked for him had to be prepared to leave the office at almost any hour and fly kites (just as the Japanese who came to work for him had to be prepared to go to a barbecue for dinner or to watch a professional football game—to most of them a semibarbaric sport only dimly understood). When, after a few years in Los Angeles, he had the company buy a large plot of land off the San Diego Freeway, someone asked him what it was for. "One day it will be our headquarters building," he replied, "but for now it is our field for flying kites." He corresponded with innumerable American kite freaks, and one of his proudest days was when the editors of *Road & Track* invited him to their offices near Newport Beach, held a kite-flying contest, and then awarded him an inscribed winner's trophy. The trophy was of a bird dog and was supposed to go to a dog breeder, but the editors had gotten a small brass kite and stuffed it in the dog's mouth, which pleased Katayama immensely. That day, he told his friends, the East had met the West. He was fascinated by the difference in the way Americans and Japanese flew their kites: even here, he thought, the Americans were frontiersmen, finding the wind current and charging into it as fast as they could, challenging it. The Japanese were more delicate about it; they would find the wind, turn their backs to it, and gently let their kites out.

He was a rare man. He brought a face to the Japanese mercantile presence, meeting him, Americans felt that they knew, understood, and liked the Japan that was behind his products. If he took pride in the growing success of Nissan America, it was a quiet pride in showing what modern Japan could do, and in the success he had helped bring to his dealers. He seemed to gain special pleasure from his work with them. After all, he had taken these ordinary and indeed often unsuccessful men, who had had nothing but their ambition and their willingness to take a chance, and helped turn them into millionaires. Years later, in his tiny office in Tokyo, he liked to point at a map of the western part of the United States. It was covered with little dots. "Each dot is a millionaire I made," he would say. The dealers loved him because he listened to them and fought for them. He wanted to find out not so much what the sales were but what

When Nissan named its first sports car the Fairlady, Katayama and his men pried the name tag off the car.

was behind them and how ordinary people in America really felt. The only thing about America he did not understand and truly hated and feared was lawsuits. When even a minor suit was filed, he began to shiver. Suitcases, he called them, because his lawyer was always talking about the suit and the case. "You have to save me from these suitcases," he would say. "They want to kill me with them."

Suitcases aside, the mid-Sixties were joyous years for Katayama. Slowly, the Datsun was getting better. At first he thought it was not jaunty enough, and he argued with Tokyo to make it sportier, but Tokyo was stuffy, regarding him as too much of a sports-car buff. He also argued with the home office over naming the cars. Tokyo kept coming up with terrible names like Bluebonnet, Cedric and Fairlady. Katayama, who increasingly fancied himself an expert on American taste, wanted more virile names, like Lion or Tiger. The problem, of course, was that Tokyo's names were the personal choices of Kawamata, who seemed to have some odd, hidden streak of anglophilia. Fairlady had been so decreed because Kawamata had once seen and apparently liked the musical *My Fair Lady*. Generally Katayama accepted his defeats on nomenclature reasonably well, but in 1969, when the first Japanese sports car arrived in America and he saw with horror that it had actually been called the Fairlady, he and his men simply pried the name tag off the car and replaced it with one using the company's internal designation for the car, 240Z. It was far more appropriate, they decided, and it was the only way to change the name without being insubordinate.

It was also during the Sixties that Katayama began to sense a change in customer attitudes, an increasingly powerful undercurrent of resentment. The objections to Detroit, he decided, were no longer just about the size and the price of the cars but about the quality and, even more important, about Detroit's response to legitimate complaints. Detroit's attitude seemed to be that if the customer was truly a good American, he would stop complaining and do the right thing, which was to buy a new car.

In the fall of 1964 Datsun made it into the annual list of the top ten importers for the first time, a list absolutely dominated by Volkswagen. VW had 63 percent of the import market with 307,000 cars sold, an average of more than 25,000 a month. In July 1965, Datsun's sales reached 1,000 a month. Back in Japan sales were rising quickly, which allowed Nissan to keep cutting the price; success was begetting success. The American market now looked more and more promising, though Volkswagen still appeared awesome. Steadily, Nissan, and then Toyota, gained on the other imports. In 1966 Nissan was fourth, with total sales of 22,000, while the VW bug sold 420,000. By 1967 Nissan had sales of 33,000; in 1969 it was still fourth, but with 58,000.

The cars were getting better, but Katayama still needed one critical addition—a jump to a 1,600 cc engine. At 1,400 cc, the current cars simply were not powerful enough. Eventually, he kept telling Tokyo, if they did not upgrade the engine, they would level off in the market. Worse, if they leveled off, they would not stay level, they would inevitably decline. On this Tokyo remained surprisingly resistant; if 1,400 cc was good enough for Japan, it was good enough for America. Katayama pleaded. He tried shock tactics, pointing out that Toyota, with a 1,600 cc model, was making sizable inroads where Datsun had once been strong. Even this failed. He had never felt so frustrated. "Why does no one listen?" he asked those around him.

Then he got an extraordinary break. In the fall of 1965 a man named Kenichi Matsumura joined Nissan. He came over from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, where he had been MITI's man on automobiles. There was a tradition of this in Japan. A high MITI official, his career completed, would go over into the industry that he had served—the Japanese called it *amakudari*, "descending from heaven." In the spring of 1966 Matsumura visited America, and he and Katayama began a series of conversations about problems the company was having.

Katayama knew immediately that this was his great chance to upgrade the engine, so he pushed as hard as he could with Matsumura about the need for the 1,600 cc. At the end of their first long session Matsumura said, "Write a letter for me, and I will sign it." Then he changed his mind. "Make it a telex," he said. "There's a board meeting coming up soon." The next day a long, impassioned telex message, which everyone at Nissan knew was from Katayama, went out over Matsumura's name. Almost immediately Katayama got an angry message from Yuji Shimamoto, who was a key man in the export department. Shimamoto had been his chief tormentor in the past and had strenuously fought him on his repeated requests to upgrade the engine. This time Shimamoto was complaining bitterly and publicly of Katayama's failure to ask him for the 1,600 cc engine any earlier. That night, April 8, 1966, Katayama wrote in his diary:

I do not know how many times I have asked the head office for more [engine] power. In

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fact I have been begging for it, but we always had to shut up because their answer was that it was impossible. Now Shimamoto tells me that everyone including Kawamata was shocked by Matsumura's telex. It is we who should be shocked, not him.

A few days later Kawamata arrived in Los Angeles with his wife. Katayama was nervous that the president might be angry with him, but Kawamata seemed not to mind the telex at all, indeed he affected to take it as a normal request. It was, of course, immediately approved, and the 1,600 cc engine went into production, which made it ready for the new 1968 model called the 510. It was a remarkable car, in any real sense Yutaka Katayama's car, a personal victory of exceptional magnitude in any auto company and particularly in a Japanese one. The 510 marked the beginning of the end of the Japanese small car as a clumsy, flimsy econobox. It was the fulfillment in that sense of Katayama's vision, of taking the best of modern European engineering and marrying it to Japanese manufacturing expertise.

In the months when the car was in its final engineering design, Katayama was on the phone to Japan constantly, one of his American associates thought he was more like an expectant mother than an auto executive. He went sleepless the night before it arrived, and when the ship was finally docking in San Pedro he was more nervous than anyone had ever seen him. As soon as the first one came off the ship, he himself drove it out of the parking facility. "Finally!" he exclaimed to the friend riding next to him. "Finally they did it! I thought it would take ten years, but they did it in seven!"

For the first few months he was like a kid with a new toy. He made everyone drive it, first his colleagues at the office, then journalists, then anyone who walked near the showroom. He loved the car, and it was inconceivable to him that anyone who touched it would not be equally excited.

In essence, as one high Nissan executive admitted at the time, the 510 was a brilliant knockoff of the BMW 1600, the main difference being that the BMW cost roughly $4,000 and the Nissan 510 about $1,800. The 510 had four-wheel independent suspension, an overhead camshaft, and a 1,600 cc engine with 96 horsepower. It was very strong, well put together, fuel efficient. It was almost immediately a hot car. The professional auto magazines were unusually enthusiastic. Car nuts loved the new Datsuns. Dealers could not keep them on the floor, and for a time there were the inevitable charges that some dealers were taking bribes in order to save cars for customers. In Detroit few of the people at the top of the auto companies took the 510 very seriously, though among the engineering people there was a sudden realization that the Japanese could be more than functional: they could be *good*.

In 1970, Datsun jumped into third place among the importers, with 150,000 pieces sold. The 510 alone sold more than 300,000 pieces in five years, and to anyone paying attention it was a sure sign that the Japanese had arrived.

It had always been a part of the basic theology of Detroit that it could roll back the foreigners anytime it wanted. The idea had always been that the imports could have 5 percent of the market, nothing more; if the foreigners went above that magic figure, Detroit would strike back. But in 1968 the figure neared 10 percent, with VW getting 54 percent of the total import market. Detroit executives were not really worried, they were making too much money for that. All they had to do whenever they wanted, they assured each other, was tool up some small cars. Soon the Detroit companies were bringing out their new compacts and subcompacts, Ford had the Maverick in 1969 and the ill-fated Pinto in 1970, and GM had the equally ill-fated Vega in 1970. But the import sales did not, as in the past, collapse. What Katayama and others had suspected was becoming true. Bonds of loyalty were being severed. It was no longer, as in the past, just an issue of size and price. The issues now were also quality and integrity.

If the first oil shock, after the Yom Kippur War in 1973, enraged and discomfited the Americans, who suddenly had to pay more for gasoline, then it truly frightened the Japanese. For it was not some temporary inconvenience, it was a crisis imperiling their society. The Japanese economy was entirely built upon oil, of which Japan, unlike the United States, had minuscule domestic supplies. What followed was pure panic. There was immediate hoarding of nearly everything, stores were mobbed, and the government had to promise that there would be enough toilet paper for everyone. A quickie book entitled *The Oil Is Cut* instantly became a best seller. Companies decreed emergency measures to conserve energy, the paint ovens at most of the auto factories, for example, were redesigned so that they needed less heat. Throughout the world of business, faucets in the lavatories produced only cold water.

The recovery came slowly. But it soon became clear that Japan was going to be the beneficiary of this crisis. Some Nissan executives claimed it was actually a blessing, because it had badly shaken the younger workers who had taken the company's success for granted and had become arrogant and spoiled, and it had made them properly grateful for their jobs. Above all, there was now a greater need for smaller, gas-efficient cars.

Soon after the Arab embargo began, the people at Nissan found out that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had completed its first mileage test and that the Datsun 1200, the company's smallest car, one that had been around for several years and that the executives were anxious to phase out, had scored the best mileage. John Parker and Mayfield Marshall, sensing that a very good commercial might be made from this, took a crew and started filming the 1200 going from California to Maine, where it finally drove up to a lobsterman standing amid a pile of lobster pots. A team of independent authorities went along to check how much gas the 1200 used. The EPA study had rated it at thirty-three miles to the gallon, the independent officials certified that on this trip the 1200 had gotten forty. The last line of the commercial was simply "Datsun Saves."

Even if there were few 1200s left to sell, Datsun was able to push its low-cost replacement, the 210. Fifteen years of hard work and constant upgrading of both performance and quality were now paying off. The Germans, because they had stayed with the Beetle, appealed to only a fraction of the new market and were unable to exploit the new opportunities. For the American auto companies, production in 1974 was down 23 percent. In the beginning, the Japanese had trouble, too, in finding the oil to keep their factories going, coping with depleted steel production, and shipping the cars they were making. But in due course the first oil shock allowed the Japanese to solidify their position in America. The real benefits came in 1975. That was the year Toyota passed Volkswagen as the leading import car. VW fell behind Toyota (268,000 to 284,000) and was only 15,000 units ahead of Nissan. (In fact, Nissan was some 67,000 vehicles ahead of VW if truck sales were included.) Even more significant, imported passenger cars went to 18.3 percent of the market in 1975, and more than half of those cars were Japanese.

Yutaka Katayama watched this startling success and knew that it marked the end of his freedom. As long as Nissan America was small, profitable, and making progress (but not too much progress), he was relatively safe in his job. But, if anything, his growing accomplishment and the considerable publicity he was receiving were reminders back home that he was getting out of control and accepting credit that was not, it was felt, rightly his. He had no sponsor in Tokyo, no one to speak up for him. Over the years, as he had begun to do well in America, friends had begged him to go see Ichiro Shioji, the powerful Nissan labor boss, during his visits to Tokyo and pay homage. The phrase they used for in the old days the labor office was right across the river from the old Nissan headquarters, was "go across the bridge." Shioji was susceptible to courtship, they said; the relationship could still be patched up. But Katayama stubbornly refused to try. His East Coast counterpart, Soichi Kawazoe, was not doing as well in sales, but he had maintained his strong connection with Shioji and thus was still well thought of. (Kawazoe, Katayama once said, had always had a gift for playing poker with the right people.) Finally, somewhat reluctantly, on one trip home, Katayama went across the bridge to see Shioji. Shioji was an hour late for the meeting. In a country where people are extremely prompt, there was no doubt of the lesson Shioji was teaching Katayama.

As the American operation became increasingly successful, more and more bright young men began to arrive from Tokyo to help Katayama. He was extremely wary of some of them. "This one," he might say, "is here to spy on me. Watch out for him. Tell him nothing." At first some of Katayama's American associates thought he was being a little paranoid, later, as they learned more of the complexity of the company's politics, they were not so sure. When Kawamata or Ishihara showed up in America, they seemed cold and disapproving, and Katayama, in turn, usually so exuberant, became reserved. The Americans in the office thought Katayama was doing a brilliant job, and they found it odd that when they took these visiting officials out to some appointment and, making small talk, mentioned something about how well Mr. K was doing, the visitors never responded, never said a kind word about him. For Katayama had been much too visible in America, had taken too much pleasure in what he had done, had not played the role of the modest Japanese businessman who owes all to his superiors. They would not lightly forgive him for that.

Katayama himself knew that from their point of view there had been too many American articles about this wonderful entrepreneurial Japanese businessman in Los Angeles who had made Nissan such a success, who had become so Americanized, and who was, it seemed, an honorary sheriff in half the counties in Texas. Too many people had said that it was Katayama's company and that the 510 was Katayama's car. All that, he knew, would hurt in Tokyo, but he did not care. He knew that they thought he had gone too American, that his clothes were considered too sporty and his manner too informal, and that every request he made to modify the car, no matter how valid, and no matter that Tokyo followed up on it, would eventually help to undo him back home. There he was seen as a spokesman for America against Japan, a man who had been implicitly critical of the existing Datsuns. He had had no illusion about his position from the start. "Everything I do right here," he told his closest American associates, "will be considered something I did wrong by Tokyo."

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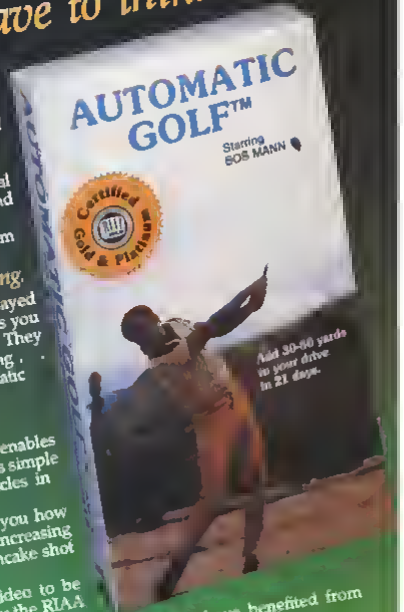
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that he would be charged with high living. He knew he would never be able to make Tokyo understand that whereas in Japan—because housing was so bad and perhaps because women were not a part of the business world—businessmen entertained by taking one another out for extravagantly expensive nights on the Ginza, in the United States, with its wonderful housing, Americans entertained in their homes. He paid a mere $25,000 for the house, and he loved entertaining there, barbecuing steak like an American but serving sushi beforehand. By American standards the house was very nice, but by Japanese standards it was extraordinarily grand, far grander than those in which his superiors lived at home. The house was always a sticking point. Tokyo never really accepted the idea of the house. A steady stream of high Nissan executives passed through California, looked at it, and held it against him, concluding that if Katayama had a house this splendid, he was in some way ripping off the company. When Katayama retired, his successor sold the house at a profit of about $50,000, and if he had held on a few years more, it would have been nearly $2 million.

The end for him began when Hiroshi Majima showed up in 1975. Majima became president, and Katayama became chairman. Japanese executives had arrived in the past, and Katayama had always been able to deal with them. Majima was different. He was Ishihara's man, an executive with clout and connections. It was clear from the start that he was there to replace Katayama and that his coming signaled the close of the era. It was an uncomfortable time for everyone. Katayama, of course, knew a lot more about America and doing business there, and Majima, just as clearly, outranked Katayama by light-years and was under orders to take the company back from him. Majima did not speak English, and to the Americans at headquarters his manner seemed chilly and evasive. It was hard to get a quick and clear answer from him. He was not comfortable with Americans, only with other Japanese, and he brought more and more of them into the Los Angeles office. For some of the Americans it was their first real recognition that they were working for a Japanese company.

Katayama knew his time was running out. He had stayed on in America past retirement anyway, and now Tokyo was catching up. In early 1977 he received a cable imperiously summoning him home, without explanation. It was as if he had suddenly disappeared. On arrival in Tokyo he was informed that he had retired a few days earlier. His friends back in Los Angeles did not know what was happening but feared the worst. Mayfield Marshall, probably Katayama's closest friend in the company, cabled him in Tokyo. "Hope they give you more than a gold watch," he said.

A few weeks later Katayama returned. He looked at Marshall and held up his wrist. On it was a gold watch. It was about the only thing they gave him.

He did not particularly want to return to Japan and for a time considered staying on in America in a different business. But he did go back, and in Tokyo, Nissan wanted to hide him. It was almost as if he had come home in disgrace. There was no reward for the job he had done. He was not put on the board. He did not make vice president. He was given a minor job in an advertising subsidiary. "I was farmed out," he wrote his friends in America. "At least I am beyond the reach of the union." Nissan tried to minimize any publicity in Japan about the role he had played. When American writers wanting to talk about the American operation showed up, the Nissan public relations people would come up with a short list of names, and though Kawazoe's was on the list, Katayama's was notable by its absence.

Not everyone ignored him. In April of 1977 Katayama was awarded a blue ribbon by MITI for his work in behalf of Japanese trade in America. That was a particularly high honor, and it pleased some of his friends back in America, for to them it was as if he had won it in spite of Nissan. But he took little pleasure in the award, to him it had a slightly bitter taste. He sensed that the Nissan people, embarrassed by his success in America and their own failure to recognize it by putting him on the board, had gotten MITI to do their work for them. It was partly a scam, he thought, and he felt oddly detached on the day of the presentation. Later he could not even remember whether or not he had celebrated with a few friends that night. A few months later there was a party in his honor given by about 150 of his friends and colleagues; they had had to pay for the party themselves, he noted acidly.

In America, Nissan moved quickly against those who had been his nearest associates. Within a few months it got rid of John Parker, whose agency had handled the Nissan account since the first commercial. But in a way Katayama got his revenge. For in America he had become not just popular, not just admired, but mythic. In 1983, *Car and Driver*, lamenting that Nissan products, though still durable, had become boring ("Nissan remains innovative only in financial matters," the magazine noted), published a special tribute to Katayama as a human being and as a car man. By dint of a rare human vision, he had helped make a small, incompetent Japanese company an exciting one, pushing it relentlessly to produce its best. What Nissan needed most now, *Car and Driver* asserted, was another such man. The title of the article said it all: WHERE HAVE YOU GONE, YUTAKA KATAYAMA?

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Going the Distance

by Charles Siebert

After 14,860 yards, how much longer can Walter Payton run?

One worries for Walter Payton. It's February. Another football season has ended. It seems, on the surface at least, to have been his most rewarding year—a Super Bowl ring to complement another, by now routine, one-thousand-plus yards of rushing. One would assume it is a time of repose, of reaping rewards and reflecting a bit on a career that, although far from over, has already established him as the NFL's most prolific and durable runner. But as a man given mostly to moving forward hard and fast, he tends to struggle with this time—a season in which he's most apt to stumble. Out of bounds, Walter Payton seems out of sorts. Jumping back and forth between the couch, TV, cassette player, and three telephones, he makes a spacious, glass-framed hotel suite twenty-four floors above the frozen moonscape of Lake Michigan seem no bigger than a closet. Finally, for a moment, his taut and powerful five feet ten inches and 204 pounds come to rest on the couch, and he tries to address a question.

"People make a lot of fuss over running with a football," he says in his soft, high-pitched voice that's not unlike Michael Jackson's, especially between brief answers when he sings along with the music blaring in the background. I ask him



PHOTOGRAPH: FOCUS ON SPORTS

CHARLES SIEBERT *is a poet and a journalist living in New York. His last piece for Esquire, a profile of choreographer Mark Morris, was published in the December 1985 issue.*

if he might turn it down just a bit.

"No," he shouts, then lets out a squealing, puckish laugh, runs over to adjust the volume, and returns.

"Everybody wants to make comparisons," he continues. "This runner is better than that one, that guy's the greatest. Shit. Just enjoy it. Enjoy all of them. I don't watch much football. It's boring. It is! 'Cause it's my job. I do it every day."

For a man who lists privacy as one of his major interests, who prefers spending his free time with his wife and two children, or hunting and fishing with friends, this has not been a good day. The better part of the afternoon he's been across the street at the McCormick Place convention center, sitting on the hood of a slowly revolving Buick, signing autographs, the main attraction of the annual Chicago Auto Show. For hours crowds pressed in around his car carrousel, as photos of Walter with new-model Bucks were passed overhead. He'd sign them without looking, his face tilted up toward the full bank of lights, his eyes glazed over in the gathering confusion.

That dizzying, spotlighted stage is as good a metaphor as any for Payton's life these days. He's long been a favorite among Chicago fans for his vibrant play on the field and for his work with local children and charities, but in the final weeks of last season the city was particularly crazed. No bar, store, or side street was beyond the beat of "The Super Bowl Shuffle." While the nation's news networks pondered nightly the next strange proclamation of Muammar el-Qaddafi, he and the rest of the world were afterthoughts here, news briefs sandwiched between talk of football. Now, with a Super Bowl victory in hand, Chicago, city of the big inferiority complex, is just beaming about their Bears, and Walter Payton, the man who ran for their team with the same frightening fury in much leaner years, is something of a god.

He gets up, pulls back the window drapes, and looks south toward the city along Lake Shore Drive. In another hour he'll be back down to earth on the hood of that Buick for an evening signing session. Already car lights are backed up from the convention center directly below, far down one lane of the Drive where the line grows steadily in the distance like beads being strung on a necklace by an unseen hand. Payton comes back to the couch, flops on his stomach, and looks off into a dark corner of cushions like a mischievous child feigning sleep.

"Keep talking," he says, then sits up again and starts twirling an ashtray in the air. Anything, it seems, even the auto show, would be better than this.

FEW PEOPLE ARE AS EXCITING TO WATCH work as Walter Payton. Football is, in simplest terms, an awful lot of indistinct rumbling for the sake of a few visible flourishes—a pass to an open receiver or an open field run. The completed pass is an immediate thrill, like a quick and apparently easy solution to a long-standing problem. A great run brings more of a prolonged and mounting excitement, like a long ride on a rodeo horse, it happens in open defiance of formidable attempts to end it. For years now Walter Payton has been defying both tacklers and the odds. Running backs last an average of four and a half seasons. He now embarks upon his twelfth. In that time, in a brutal sport, he has never suffered a major injury, has played in every game but one, and has amassed a total of 14,860 yards rushing—eight and a half of the kind of miles most of us would only attempt in a Land Rover. He owns practically every running record there is: the most total rushing yardage, the most combined yardage (running and pass receiving), the most hundred-yard games, the most consecutive hundred-yard games, the most yards rushing in a single game (275), and in a profession where even one thousand-yard season is a major achievement, he's got nine, the most of those, too.

But greater than all of Payton's records, and more memorable is the manner in which he's gone about establishing them. He plays football with an almost reckless fervor. While he's the game's leading ground gainer, he may lead too in its unrecorded aspects—throwing crushing blocks to protect a quarterback or free another runner, and making full-fledged fakes into the line to freeze one set of defenders and free up other parts of the field. "Most backs," says Gale Sayers, former Chicago Bear halfback and one of football's greatest runners, "myself included, feel that if they're going to run the ball twenty-five times or more in a game, why put a lot of effort into something like blocking. But Walter doesn't think that way. That's what sets him head and shoulders above other running backs—the maximum effort he puts into the other phases of the game."

Nicknamed Sweetness—some say for his humble disposition, while others claim it was for his sweet moves as a halfback at Jackson State—Payton came to the Bears in 1975, the twenty-one-year old son of a Columbia, Mississippi, factory worker. With 4.5 speed in the forty-yard dash, in college he scored points every way imaginable, 464 of them—the most in NCAA history. He was also known for his sweet moves off the field. In his senior year he and a girlfriend took second place in a televised *Soul Train* dance contest. His coach at Jackson State, Bob Hill, recalls

Banging out yardage against the Packers: Payton is the most nimble runner ever to punish a defense.



PHOTOGRAPH: FOCUS ON SPORTS

how Walter used to dance before football games just to get in the mood. "The whole team would be standing in the parking lot on campus waiting for the bus to the stadium," says Hill. "Some guys would start playing music and Walter would dance for a good half hour sometimes. He'd put pads on, jump up, and land on his elbows and knees. He'd do flips and everything. He was only pumping himself up, but it scared me. I couldn't stand to watch. You know, he still swears that if he'd had a girl who could dance better, he could have won that contest."

Payton got off to a slow start as a rookie finishing with 695 yards, but knocked



Payton sets...

out 1,390 in his second year, and, not counting the strike-shortened '82 season, he's averaged over 1,500 yards a season ever since. It was in that second year that NFL fans first got a sense of the competitive fury that courses through Payton's veins. In the last game of the season he sprained his ankle and lost a chance to beat out O. J. Simpson for the rushing title. Coming off the field, he held his hands over his face and cried. That kind of intensity would readily endear him to football fans, many of whom had come to share a certain skepticism about the attitude of high-priced so-called superstars. If Payton seems a little high-strung for the everyday world, on the football field he leaps, dances, and smashes his way around like a man who's finally found a world that's game enough for his sizable spirit. Even when held and surrounded by a bevy of defenders, he's pumping his legs and flailing his arms at people and you have to wonder, What's gotten into this person?

"I don't know," he says with a slight yawn, "determination, I guess. Got it from my parents. My father taught me that whatever you do, do your best or don't even try." It might sound a bit like a cliché if you've never seen Payton in action.

IT'S THE FIRST SUNDAY OF 1986, WITH ONLY 14 degrees of heat in Chicago's air and none at all in the wind, the kind of wind that lifts and shakes a car around on its chassis driving along Lake Shore Drive toward Soldier Field. From the press box perched along the top rim of the stadium, the divisional play-off game between the Giants and the Bears seems a ghostly affair: the bright, sun-blanched cold seizing the shouts of sixty-five thousand fans before they can coalesce into a decent roar; the old stadium's white granite bowl and classical columns set against the snowy stretches of Lake Michigan, and directly below, the day's only color, a bright-green swath of Astroturf where players pad about silently for points.

And even at that strange remove, Payton's is a charged, almost off-putting presence. He's rarely at rest. On the sidelines before the game, he paces, head down, hands tucked into his waist, fit to be tied. Before the second-half kickoff, he's stirring the cold air above his head to start up the crowd noise. On the field he's only still when awaiting the snap of the ball, seven yards behind the bulk of his team, alone in his familiar, alert half-crouch, arms straight, hands on knees, helmet fixed straight ahead. It may be the compactness of his build, the proportions: nothing outsize, the round helmet on a flat table of shoulders, the torso paring down to a slim waist, the next widening of muscle at the hips paring down slightly to his powerful legs, and it may be just the look of his feet and the way that look can inform a person's entire appearance—all that white tape from the bottom of his calves down around his running shoes, with only a dark heel and toe visible, so that it looks like he has two cloven hooves, and it could be, too, the way he runs, with a light antic grace, always up on his toes, taking very long strides for a man his height. But put it all together and he looks like some kind of centaur prancing around down there among mere mortals. He does prance; it's one of his trademarks. As he starts to one side looking for an opening, the football palmed and waving his hand, he does a unique, straight-legged, toe-pointed pitter-patter prance as though trying to adjust the ground to his strides or find the proper gear setting for the journey ahead. It's not a showy gesture, really, but one rather like an odd physical response to a precarious situation, as though he's trying to shake off excess energy, streamline his spirit for the few tight spaces available to a running back in the NFL.

WHAT NATURE DOLED OUT TO PAYTON HE has built up and honed with rigorous training over the years—savage off-season workouts, which he and his brother Eddie, a former NFL kickoff specialist, first devised during the hot Mississippi summer of Walter's senior year in college. "I wanted something to do," says Walter, "but I didn't want to be out there all day messing around. I wanted something that could get the job done fast and give me the best results." What the brothers Payton came up with was sprinting up and down the levees and white sandbanks of the Pearl River at the hottest part of the day. "It was a program that once we mastered, few others could do," says Eddie. "We had guys come from all over to train, and we



...checks the defense...

carried more of them off than could walk away when they finished."

The workouts did more than build up Payton's tremendous leg drive and endurance. Constantly shifting beneath his body weight, the sand forced him to collect himself over and over while still moving forward. Essentially, it enacted the physical dynamic of making a cut or quick change of direction on a football field, and while the moves a back makes are basically instinctual and spontaneous, Payton feels the sand helped him develop both balance and foot speed (the rate at which the feet react to the openings the eyes see). "It makes you get that next leg out," Payton says, "and helps you to not slow down when you make a cut. You're dead if you slow down to make a cut in the NFL." In various venues since the early days on the banks of the Pearl River—the steep steps of the Mississippi Memorial Stadium in Jackson that Payton ran each day for a half hour straight during May and June, or the 45-degree hill of loose dirt he found five years ago not far from his home in the northwest suburbs of Chicago—his uphill

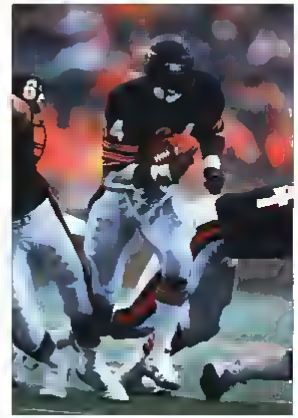
workouts along with weekly weight training have kept Payton in the best physical condition imaginable. It's why, when you see him on the flat and flawless Astroturf, it almost seems unfair, like he's so tightly wound, the ground is just a premise for leaving. When he sweeps wide and starts into that stutter step, it's as though his feet are bored and he's just prodding the earth to challenge him more.

PAYTON ACTUALLY TRACES THE STEP'S origin to a day in the first grade when he couldn't stand to walk in line with his classmates as they were ushered after school to the edge of the school grounds. "I didn't understand," he says, "I didn't see why I had to walk behind slow people. So I took off and the teachers said, 'Stop him!' and these big eighth-grade guys were trying to stop me and hold me, so I used the stutter step to keep them off and get away."

What may have begun as an instinctual response to a bad predicament, Payton has since worked into his running style, and NFL defenders are the ones who've ended up paying for it. "I use it to get the edge," Payton says. "When the defense is coming after you, they have the advantage because they have the momentum going. They already have the point picked out where they're going to meet you and lay a lick on you. So I start running and then I use that step to throw their timing off. Once they have to start thinking, I've got the advantage."

It might seem paradoxical at first to examine such subtleties as stutter steps and getting the edge in a game as seemingly plodding and straightforward as football, but on any level from high school to the pros at which equally strong and well-trained athletes compete, even in the most direct one-on-one collisions along the line of scrimmage, that's exactly what the game comes down to: who gets to whom first more often, who's giving out the hits and who's taking them—or as ex–Detroit Lions defensive tackle Doug English once said: "I think by the end of the game, a guy knows who wants to play another quarter of football and who doesn't." Walter Payton knows in his bones that he wants to. He spends his time on a football field madly constructing and tending to his advantage like a whole town building a levee against a threatening tide. He often does it in surprisingly small and subtle ways for a man of such obvious talents, employing tactics most football players are usually too preoccupied with their own exhaustion or pain to think about.

He won't, for example, ever lie down on the field after a tackle. For eleven years now and in thousands of hits—strong, fleet men tossing themselves full throttle at his body—no one can remember Payton ever staying down to rest or nurse a wound. He springs to his feet and strides evenly to the huddle, but not so fast that he can't get a breather. It's as though he hasn't been tackled so much as annoyed, distracted briefly from something he'd set out to do, something he's going to do anyway. "Why lay down there," he says now, defiantly. "After the ref blows the whistle you need all the time you can to get back and get your mind ready for the next play." The other reason, of course, is keeping that edge, never letting the defenseman know he's hurt you. Dick Butkus, great former middle linebacker for the Bears, recalls one play in San Diego two years ago. "I was on the sideline and Walter got, well, not knocked out, but he didn't know where he was. He was on the ground still fumbling



...breaks for daylight.

for the ball after it was blown dead. When he got up, he started wandering around and then just turned and walked off the field. The trainer had smelling salts for him, and he went back in. That's what you try to do, keep your injuries a mystery."

Payton offers two unpleasant options to defenders—either they'll miss him or they won't. His long runs are usually an amalgam of collisions only he survives and the deft moves he makes on the remaining, startled defenders. He has amazing shiftiness for a so-called power back, an ability to go with both feet planted in one direction and then quickly retract the whole of himself to pursue another. "He had a run in my rookie year down in Dallas," recalls Bear all-pro center Jay Hilgenberg. "He was running a sweep around the left side coming right toward our bench. It was like he was coming right at me, and he made a move, well, it made me fall down. It was unbelievable. He stepped one way and then leaned completely back the other way, and I'll tell you, his ear almost touched the ground. I had to go sit down after that. I didn't think a human being could do that."

Still, his most distinctive trait as a runner is the way he goes down when he does. Pound for pound, he's one of the strongest men in football. He can bench press 390 pounds, almost twice his weight, leg press seven hundred pounds, and walk the width of a football field on his hands. NFL Films recently put together a video called *Crunch Course*, a record of the game's hardest hits and hitters, and devoted seven minutes of it to Payton, a running back. "Who are the hardest hitters?" he says, repeating the question. "Nobody sticks out in my mind. They all hit the same. I'm not going to give anyone that tribute."

Payton refuses to accept the idea that as a running back he must accept hits. Ever since his days at Jackson State, he's followed the credo of Coach Hill—"Die hard. Never die easy. Don't take a hit, dish it out." At the point of contact he quickly reverses roles on the defender, recoils and delivers his helmet, shoulder, forearm or straight-arm into the tackler. Even as he's going out of bounds, something he hates to do, he's knocking the defender in the head along the way. He's forever staking out his territory on the field, planting little seeds of unrest in a defense from which he might reap a long gain later. "His style is much different from most," says Mike Ditka, former all-pro tight end for the Bears and now their head coach. "It's just that I've never seen anybody who's more reluctant to get out of the way of a hit. He uses that stiff arm so well, which is really an odd trait because time has passed it on by. He really does look to punish the guy tackling him. I don't know if that's wrong. It's different. He's lasted eleven years doing it. I think he likes to make the other guy know, Hey, if you're gonna deal with me, you got a problem."

Payton has even patented a way to advance his cause after a play is over. Almost as a reflex action, after each carry he puts the ball about a foot ahead of his marked forward progress, gets up, and walks to the huddle. And each time the refs come to move the ball back, but Payton figures he might gain a few inches in the transaction, and over the course of eleven years perhaps a hundred yards or so. "It's a little thing maybe," says Butkus, "but you're trying to tackle this guy all game, and you knock him down, and all of a sudden he's moving the ball up. It's like he's saying, Yeah, you stopped me, but I'm kind of still going." Referees have come to expect it of Payton as well as occasionally having their shoes untied—a little hand emerging from the bottom of a massive body pileup to deftly undo a lace or two. The man is irrepressible.

At his locker after the Giants game—a 21–0 victory for the Bears and a ninety-three-yard effort for Payton that the press called "bottling him up"—Payton takes advantage of the hiatus in TV interviews to set up his little tape player with portable

speakers and, to the souod of Grover Washington Jr., do an equipment-doffing dance. Without all the padding he's even more impressive to look at. The oft-quoted lines of former Bear running-back coach Fred O'Conner, about God picking up a chisel one day when he wanted to make a halfback and ending up with Walter, come to mind. His arms and shoulders are massive for a man with his frame, and his torso looks almost too taut for comfort, with a broad back, slender waist, and a stomach of stonelike ledges. It seems as if the top half of him was completed separately and placed whole on an equally strong and well-shaped stand of legs, so that at the juncture of his hips and lower back he has two shaded hollows where most of us have those insoluble handles of fat. According to the Bears' trainers, his body is only 5 to 8 percent fat, as opposed to the 18 percent average for young, healthy males. The word *unit* comes to mind when you see him, a unit of very fast strength. After a brief conversation with Payton a week before the Super Bowl I patted him on the back to wish him luck and my hand fell away like a bird whose flight a brick wall interrupted. The thought of that coming at you at 4.5 speed is very unsettling.

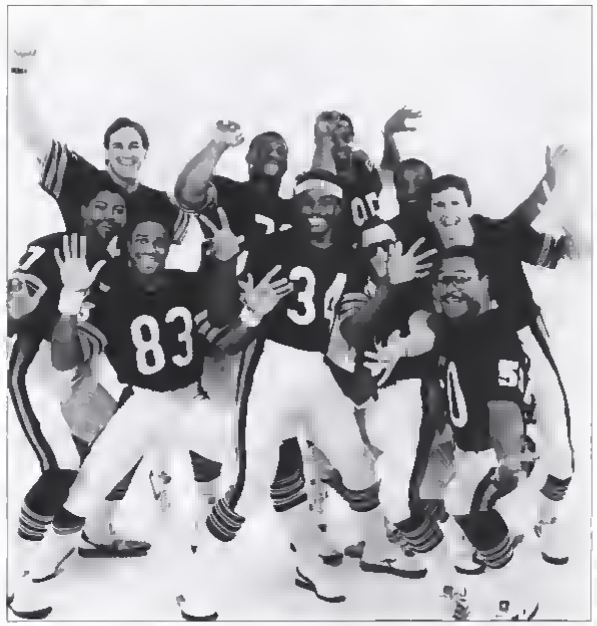
THERE IS A DESIRE AMONG THE DEVOTEES of any sport to declare one athlete the best ever, and for many football fans no one's more deserving of that distinction than Walter Payton. Because he plays so many phases of the game to near perfection, his coach, other coaches, fellow and former players will say without hesitation that he's the greatest football player they've ever seen. As for running with the ball alone, he broke the great Jim Brown's "unbreakable" record of 12,312 yards in 1984, has already played longer and carried the ball more times than any other back, and could very conceivably compile eighteen thousand yards before he retires, all of which would seem to preclude any discussion about who's the greatest runner. There are, of course, many factors in the hot Brown versus Payton debate. Some say, for example, that Brown had it harder because there was no Astroturf when he played and so little passing that he was the sole focus of defenses. Others point out that Payton has had his own hardships: for years he *was* the Bears' offense, and he faces defenders who are bigger, faster, and stronger than those in Brown's day. It goes back and forth.

But yard and year totals and the various factors affecting them are all rather beside the point when you talk or think about football's great running backs. What excites us about them has more to do with individual style, how each back in his own way, in one long run, can give us that same exhilarated feeling of having just cheated fate in the form of eleven angry men. When you watch a film of a long touchdown run by a Hugh McElhenny or Gale Sayers, you see them go sixty or seventy yards through the melee of a defense entirely unscathed, making moves that empty whole sides of a field so they can just stroll the last twenty yards into the end zone, and you're left with a vague sense of foreboding, as if someone, sooner or later, will have to pay for what just happened, make some ritualistic sacrifice to right a great imbalance and appease the gods of defense.

McElhenny, who ran for the San Francisco 49ers in the '50s, tells a story about a dark alley he had to pass through as a child to go to the store for his mother. He'd run through fast and furiously in fear of the potential danger in the dark places he couldn't see. McElhenny likens that experience to running with a football in the NFL. All the great backs seem to have their own alleys of fear, and what we remember about them is their distinct ways of getting through them.

With great speed and uncanny peripheral vision or a sixth sense that allowed him to make moves on people coming up from behind him, Sayers ran in a jagged, terraced-hillside pattern up the football field. If, by contrast, O. J. Simpson, one of the most graceful ground gainers ever, ran scared through his career, he seemed to do it patiently, taking a loss or two before unraveling one of his long, soft, curvaceous runs. With a slight pull of his free arm along the air and a good body lean, he'd get into open parts of the field the way a woman slips into an oversize sweater. The runs of Tony Dorsett, Dallas Cowboys halfback of nine years with more than ten thousand yards who's still going strong, have a more geometric look to them. Often he'll move sideways behind the line in a kind of searching saunter, and then, at the slightest suggestion of an opening, he's off in a straight shot and gone. Those first ten or fifteen yards pass so quickly beneath him, it's like he's got retro-rockets in his legs; he just flips a switch and flies.

Guys like Sayers, Simpson, Dorsett, and Marcus Allen—the slighter, slashing-style backs—all make you worry about the time when the danger they so deftly sidestep will catch up to them. The power backs, on the other hand, like Jim Brown, Jimmy Taylor, Earl Campbell, Franco Harris, John Riggins, and Larry Csonka, tend to make you worry more for the guys who get in their way. These are the backs who



Doing "The Super Bowl Shuffle": Payton, Jim McMahon, and the Bears had the rest of the league in a funk last season.

year after year churn out big yardage, and yet they're usually spoken about in terms of the teams they struggled for, not so much for their running styles alone. Even Jim Brown, an incredible athlete who seemed to get wherever he wanted to on the field, was not really a beautiful runner to watch, a runner with a particular flair and grace you can close your eyes and recall.

But what makes Walter Payton so compelling to watch is that he possesses the traits of both a power and a finesse back. You can praise him for his longevity and his doggedness, his ability to get the vital yards on a crucial third-down play, and you can just sit back and watch him run. He excites one the way a flashy runner does, starting to one side, head up, eyes wide, his chest out in a kind of boast, both hands pushing against the ball by his hip, his legs flailing beneath him for a civil stride, then the ball in one hand flares up with his arms as he almost disassembles to fake out one defender and quickly assembles himself again to straight-arm the next. He looks, at times, like he can't figure out which of his talents to use. You don't worry for him as you might for the slighter slashers, he's too taut and tough-looking, and will often step right into the dark danger areas of the alley just to take a look or a hit and then go on. He runs with incredible urgency, driven not so much by the fear of being stopped as by the fear of opportunities to be stopped, the lack of challenges. It's almost as though he's trying frantically to get past the empty spaces where the world's wide reservoir of repose might rush in and overwhelm him.

PLAYING FOOTBALL HURTS A LOT. YOU CAN see it in a locker room after just one game: the bleeding cuts and bruises, the swollen joints, grimacing players pulling off pads and hobbling between piles of discarded bandages and tape, you can see it after one season: Bear cornerback Leslie Frazier on crutches in the snow in front of Halas Hall, taking the knee he wrecked in the Super Bowl for a checkup at the Bears' team office, and you can see it after a career: Mike Ditka, who finished playing in 1972, almost wincing with each step to and from press-conference podiums in the weeks before the Super Bowl. "You pay a price," says Jay Hilgenberg. "When you're forty-five or fifty years old you're probably not going to be out running around with your kids very much."

Walter Payton is only thirty-two years old, but he's played eleven seasons of football, it's hard to know how much he hurts and how much more he wants to take. Incredibly, he rolled up 1,557 yards last season. He's been through three offensive lines and his current blockers are just hoping to keep up with him. "It's something he has inside of him," says all-pro tackle Jim Covert, "a desire and a love of the game. I sure don't see any signs of him slowing down. He can play as long as he wants. He's going to push the record so far out of sight nobody's ever going to see it." Says Hilgenberg, "I just hope I can play as long as he plays. Maybe when I'm fifty years old, and they're showing all those highlight films, I'll catch a glimpse of myself out there trying to get out of his way."

Payton's longevity is perhaps his greatest achievement, and it confounds people. Doctors from sports clinics and hospitals around the country have made requests to analyze him, to run tests to find out exactly what it is he's made of. There are theories about why he's stayed around so long, why he's avoided the dreaded knee injury. He keeps himself in such good shape and has the benefit of more sophisticated knowledge about weight training, something players like Sayers and Butkus never had; he runs up on his toes, avoiding the firm leg plant in which knees can get caught and twisted; he uses his hips, buttocks, and thighs more in a straight-ahead running style that's less vulnerable than the open-flanked, side-to-side movements of the slashing back. And then there's Gale Sayers's explanation. "It's the luck of the draw. One day it's you, another it's somebody else. Walter's still going strong after eleven seasons and more power to him."

Although he's avoided the career-ending injury, Payton is not immune to the ravages of the game. He had arthroscopic surgery on both knees in 1984 to clear out the aftereffects of years of banging and pounding, especially on Astroturf, for which Payton has little regard ("It's a pain in the ass," he scowls. "It's bad for everything but television.") He also played much of last season in pain, with a sore shoulder and torn cartilage in his ribs. Each year the pains linger longer and accumulate, Payton responds by stepping up his conditioning program in the off-season in order to maintain the level and pace he's used to. "The day he doesn't arrive at training camp in great shape," says Ditka, "the day he decides it's not worth paying the price in the off-season, he'll no longer be effective."

OVER THE YEARS PAYTON HAS MADE A HABIT of hinting that the next one or two seasons might be his last. Back in 1977 he adamantly stated he wouldn't play past five seasons, that he didn't want the game to debilitate him, that he wanted to pursue, among other things, his dancing career. He smiles now when reminded of that. "I was kind of wild," he says, lying back on the hotel-suite sofa. "I must have had too many Michelobs when I said it. I just say those things to keep people off me. Because if I said I'm going to play eleven or twelve seasons, people would look for ways that I couldn't play that long. It's the nature of the beast. I'm just protecting myself from it. I don't let anybody know what's going on in my head." Of his vow to slit his wrists if he plays fifteen seasons: "Yep, that's too damn long."

It could be the aftereffects of a full eleventh season along with all the postseason chaos, but at times it appears the "big-eyed boy"—as a high school teacher dubbed Payton for the alert, almost startled look in his eyes when he runs—has had all the boy beaten out of him. He was downright dour after the Super Bowl, disappearing from the Bears' locker room, returning a half hour later to a makeshift interview area in the bowels of the Superdome, where, after much prodding from reporters, he admitted that he was sad and disappointed, and then walked off with his son Jarrett running interference, the mad throng parting respectfully. Many speculated that he was upset about not scoring a touchdown.

"It wasn't the touchdown," Payton says now, softly. He gets up and starts going back and forth between rooms to ready himself for the evening auto show. "It was a conglomeration of things I don't want to get into right now. Basically, the Super Bowl was anticlimactic for me. The game was dull."

Payton's desire may desert him before his body does, and not many football players get to go out that way. He has his rushing record and then some and his long-awaited championship, but now he has his sights set on eighteen thousand yards. "Never being satisfied," he says somewhat wearily as he sits back down on the sofa. "Knowing you can do better than you already have. If you lose that desire, you may as well get the hell out." The possibility of injury doesn't scare him as much as the idea of playing with anything less than his usual fervor. He knows the peculiar protection that aggressing through a danger affords and is more fearful now of slowing down and finding what awaits him there.

Payton says he doesn't watch films of himself running—"I don't have the time, *yet*"—doesn't visualize runs in his head and doesn't dream of them at night. "I have the same ol' dreams as everybody else. I dream about girls. I dream about cars, about flying. Running? Noooo! Not unless someone's chasing me." He shifts about nervously as though trying to get out from under the sound of his own responses. Somehow these are all good signs, as though he's still so given over to the task of running, he hasn't the time or distance to describe it. "I'm not feeling a thing when I'm running and cutting on the field. I don't even know what I'm doing. I'm an artiste!" he shouts, suddenly animated. "Everything I do is spontaneous and creative." He sits up and waves his hand slowly before his eyes in some mock mystic trance. "It's poetry in motion." Then he turns, serious, and stares right at me: "And I'm running for my life." ●

Can These Marriages Be Saved?

Divorce proceedings of the rich and famous

by Delia Ephron

JANE v. DICK

Jane: When Dick left me, I got depressed. I mean really depressed. But now I'm going to a therapist and it's been incredible. In my first session he said, "What do you want?" It was so brilliant, because you know what I realized? I didn't know! I mean it was always Dick and Jane, Dick and Jane, never just Jane. My shrink says I was intimidated by Dick. Like even though it was my money, too, I never felt it was. When I bought a pair of shoes, I always told Dick the price minus two dollars so it wouldn't seem as much. I mean, even though it was Dick and Jane, it was like Dick was in capital letters and Jane was in lowercase. Also, though Dick denies it, he always acted as if what I said wasn't as important as what he said. If he said, "Look, look," I always looked. But if I said, "Look, look," he didn't pay any attention.

Spot is living with me and visits Dick on alternate weekends. I got the house and pretty much all the furnishings because Spot needs continuity.

Dick: It's true I was having an affair with Eloise, but I don't think she was the reason the marriage broke up per se. Jane and I never should have been married in the first place. We'd been going together since we were kids, and she said it wasn't going anywhere so we had to break up or get married. So we got married.

It's been rough being without Spot. What I miss most is the dailiness—the walks, the feedings, my watching the football game in one room while Spot scratches himself in another. When we're together now, it seems like we're always doing things. I'm either throwing a ball or a bone. We never just hang out.

What makes it really hard is that Eloise's dog Weenie is living with us. I don't get to be Spot's master but I have to be stepmaster to Weenie. Luckily, when Spot visits, he and Weenie get along great. The problem is, Eloise and I have different rules for raising dogs. She lets Weenie sleep at the bottom of our bed. Spot has always slept on the service porch. I can tell from the way he whimpers at night he doesn't think it's fair that Weenie gets to be in the bedroom. Eloise says if she moves Weenie out of the bedroom now he'll feel rejected, and he's feeling insecure these days as it is. Well, so is Spot. I don't know. The only thing Eloise and I ever fight about is the dogs.

MINNIE v. MICKEY

Minnie: I was the one who did it. I kicked him out. But he made my life so miserable I had to. That's always been Mickey's game—passive aggression. It really pisses me off. He acts like a bastard, then gets to be the victim.

What an infant! His priorities are completely screwed up. Like if I was about to be eaten by a cat and Mickey ran into a lost mouse, he'd spend an hour making sure the mouse got where he was supposed to, and to hell with me. Mickey's always wanted to be loved—by the masses, by the studio, by everyone but his wife. Well, he says I'm supposed to love him no matter what. I told him he's got me mixed up with his mother.

I gave up my career for Mickey. I was going to be just as famous as he, but no, Mickey wanted me to stay home with the kids. The only time I had any fun was when the company trotted me out for a stockholders' meeting. And then they always wanted me to wear the same damn thing—a polka-dot dress and those ridiculous high heels. Do you know what it feels like to wear shoes that are too large for you? Mickey couldn't stand it when I complained. He said he didn't mind the shorts with large buttons, why should I mind the polka dots and the shoes? Doesn't he realize he's just a figurehead, a glorified PR man? Maybe he does. Maybe he feels empty and that's why he screws anything that squeaks. Whatever. It's not my problem anymore.

It's really strange how everything changes. Mickey and I were together fifty years, and now when I see him I think, Who is this mouse? How was I ever attracted to him?

Mickey: Everything I have to say about this, I've already said through my agent.

DELIA EPHRON *is the author of* Funny Sauce Us, the Ex, the Ex's New Mate, the New Mate's Ex and the Kids *from which this is excerpted. It will be published this month by Viking Penguin Inc.*

ILLUSTRATION—LASSE ÅBERG; PHOTOGRAPH MARIA MORELLO





ILLUSTRATIONS—LYNDA GRAY

ARCHIE ANDREWS v. VERONICA LODGE

Archie: I guess I just don't get it. I always thought we were the perfect couple, but when I told Betty, Reggie, and Jughead that Veronica and I were splitting, they said they'd been expecting it for years. Veronica says we're just not in the same place anymore. She says we never really were, it just seemed like it because, in high school, we were both popular. Anyway, I'm holding her back. She says I never take anything seriously, even California wines, and my idea of a good time is to go to a high school basketball game with the old crowd. I told her I'd change. I'd root for the NBA. She said, "Great," like really sarcastically. It seems like nothing's ever enough for her.

Betty's been really helpful through this, pointing out all the ways Veronica hasn't been there for me. Betty's a family therapist now so she knows a lot about this stuff. At first we just met for coffee and talked, ya know, kinda informally. But I'm going to have my first real session Saturday night. It's the only time she can see me.

Veronica: That was my best friend Betty on the phone. She has been so great to me through this, you wouldn't believe it—calling every day. Friends are so important, aren't they? But it's really strange. Aren't you supposed to be depressed when you get divorced? I've never felt better. Because of this divorce, I've found a career. I'm going to be a consultant to divorcing couples on splitting up their belongings. Isn't that fantastic?! I always knew Archie was holding me back, but until I got divorced, I never knew from what.

I made up all these rules. They worked so well for me and Archie that I just know they'll work for everyone else. For one thing, they're based on fairness. That's the most important part. Do you want to hear them? Great.

First of all, whatever you inherited, you keep. In the case of Archie and me, that meant I got the china, silver, flatware, and crystal. Anything that was your hobby, you also keep. Furnishing the house was my hobby, so I kept the house and the furniture. Archie kept his collection of high school yearbooks and his sixteen letter sweaters. If you both collected something together, you split the collection in half unless one of you put in much more time collecting than the other. That person gets more, proportionate to the amount of time put in. For example, since I was the one who was pregnant and gave birth, I got to pick two children for Archie's one. We have two kids so I kept them both. When I tried to discuss this with Archie so he would understand my reasoning, he said, "Do whatever you want." And that brings up another thing I discovered: in order for the splitting-up of things to work, both people don't have to participate. The only thing Archie contributed was his saying that if one person made fun of an object, the other should get it. Well, fine, that's his loss because he thinks everything is a big joke and I have no sense of humor.

Wait, there's more. Anything that your parent paid for, you get. For instance, Daddykins gave us the money for the stereo and the car so I got them. Record collections should be divided in half—rock 'n' roll selected by performer, classical by composer. But, and here it gets a little complicated, if you have nothing on which to use something, then you don't get the thing because what would you do with it? So I ended up taking all the records because I had the stereo.

You see, it's important to be fair, but you must also be practical at the same time.

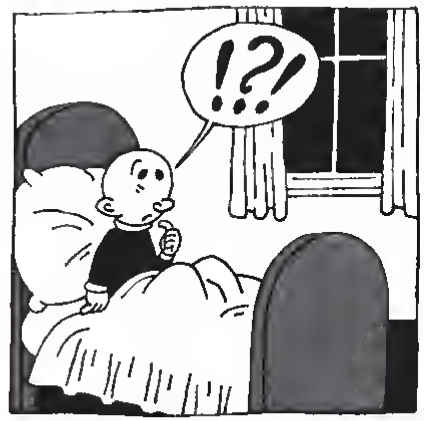
POPEYE v. OLIVE OYL

Popeye: I hate to think of Swee'pea growing up with that woman as his mother (or should I say, as *her* mother? I've never been absolutely sure what sex Swee'pea is. I think a boy). Olive is a complete control freak. Just get a load of the poor kid's schedule: Monday, clarinet; Tuesday, computer class; Wednesday, soccer; Thursday, scouts; Friday, gymnastics. I don't think he has any fun when he's with her. And she's always acting like I'm not a responsible person. Just because I don't have a job. When I take Swee'pea sailing, she always says, "Don't forget to put sun block on him." She claims I once brought him back as red as a lobster, which isn't true. "Oh, Popeye," she shrieked, "Look what you've done!" Somebody should do something about that voice. I thought when we got married it would lower a few octaves, but I found out marriage doesn't change anything.

I think Swee'pea's going to want to live with me when he's older. I wish he did right now. If he's a boy, he'd be better off with his father.

Olive: Okay, so he rescued me a few times when we were younger. Popeye always liked to put on a big show when everyone was watching. Most of the time, he just lay around on that boat with a pipe in his mouth. I suppose I shouldn't complain. The truth is, I don't need him anymore because, now that I've taken karate, I can rescue myself.

Popeye's always been pretty good to Swee'pea, considering we never did know who his father was and I'm not sure I'm his mother. Though I wish Popeye would grow up already. When I first met him, I thought it was so cute the way he flipped the tops off tin cans and poured the contents down his throat. We all did things like that when we were kids. But now he's forty and it's time to use a knife and fork. Popeye says I'm so uptight. Just because Swee'pea has Monday, clarinet, Tuesday, computer class, Wednesday, soccer, Thursday, scouts, Friday, gymnastics. I'm not uptight, *he's* irresponsible. Once he brought Swee'pea back from sailing as red as a lobster. Men have it so easy. Doesn't he realize what it's like being a single mother? He takes Swee'pea out, buys him whatever he wants, and drops him off. I'm the real parent—I'm the one who makes sure he studies and gets enough sleep and talks to him about his feelings about androgyny. I guess when it comes to Swee'pea, you could say that I'm the lettuce and Popeye's the dressing, which is pretty ironic if you think about it. ☻




From
Montgomery Clift
to William Hurt,
from
Humphrey Bogart
to Harrison Ford...
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William Hurt and the Curse of the Spider Man

On the brink of greatness, William Hurt struggles to get free of his web

by Jack Kroll

"Look, I'm not a talented man," says William Hurt. "You know it and I know it."

"I don't know it," I say.

"Well, you should know it," says Hurt.

"You're not a talented man?" I press him.

"Well, I'm not *that* talented a man," he says.

"Well then, what are you?" I ask.

"I'm a focused man," he says.

We are sitting in an Italian restaurant on New York's Upper East Side, and Bill Hurt is engaged in one of his favorite pastimes—putting himself down. Few who have seen him act would agree with his estimate of his ability. And as for being "focused," well, that's the last word many people would use to describe Hurt. The actor is a walking paradox: the owner of one of the cleanest, clearest, least self-indulgent acting styles in the business, Hurt is legendary for the far-out, labyrinthine, metaphysical flights of fancy that have driven interviewers on several continents into a state of mumbling meemies. WILLIAM HURT: ACTOR WITH THE ATOM BRAIN blazed a headline in one English magazine. Another interviewer succinctly summed up the experience of listening to Hurt: He sounds like a man who has just smoked his first joint."

Some of this Hurt-shock can be explained by reporters' preference for crunchy, flash-frozen quotes. Hurt can come up with those. Responding to a question about nude scenes in his first film, *Altered States*, Hurt said: "All scenes are love scenes and all scenes are naked." He has referred to Hollywood as "a Tower of Baubles." "Defining theater as a ritual, he has said, "I would like to supplant the ritual of war with the ritual of the imagination." But normally, his discourse is a plunge into thickets of abstraction. One of his mottoes is "I believe in what I don't know more than what I know."

It's Hurt's reckless romance with the unknown that flabbergasts his interlocutors. In the first conversation I ever had with him, five years ago, he said, with startling passion: "The central metaphor of my life is a circle and a center, and the accompanying knowledge that the circle is the circle, the center is the center, but they are not the same." This is the kind of divagation that can strike terror to the heart of Hurt's listener. A few years ago Hurt was delivering a tribute to Burt Lancaster at the New York Film Critics' awards. Lancaster, seated at a table, fixed Hurt with a grateful smile that slowly froze into a rictus of appalled bafflement as Hurt's homage became a runaway train of celebratory rhetoric.



PHOTOGRAPH: JEAN MOSS

The actor as himself: "My work comes after a long period of neurosis."

If you listen to Hurt with your ears open, you find a volcanic sincerity, a fierce desire to cut through the usual actor's jargon to a more universal truth. He passionately hates easy answers, and in a way for him all answers are too easy. Hurt also hates interviews, but unlike many actors who hate them, he will not be evasive, coy, or condescending. He won't slather you with fake charm while contempt glitters in his eyes.

As his friend Sigourney Weaver has said: "What I respect about Bill is that he's not afraid to sound like an asshole." Hurt called my attention to Weaver's statement with amused pride, he'd rather be called a thinking-man's asshole than be told what a great actor he is.

So here he is, in this pleasant Italian restaurant on Manhattan's East Side, looking, as usual, incandescently nondescript: six-feet-two frame slumped in an off-the-rack preppie shirt, blond hair lank and casual, blue eyes calm behind those now-famous wire frames. "I'm not a great actor," he insists again. "But I have a great quality. I respect others. No one can look me in the face and say I'm as good as Streep, Scott, or Duvall. The greatest thing is to be nominated for Best Supporting Actor. If you're not supporting something, what are you doing up there?"

He pours himself another glass of wine. With Hurt, the mixture of wine and words can be a flammable compound. Fueled up, he launches into a salvo of Shakespeare quotations, blasting off into golden oldies from *Richard II*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *King John*. The latter, the most interesting, is the great speech by the Bastard on "commodity," a term that Hurt is clearly applying to actors. Ignoring his cooling cannelloni, his eyes riveted to his listener's, his voice low but filled with power and music, Hurt delivers the entire speech, rising to the ironic climax: "Since kings break faith upon commodity, /Gain be my lord, for I will worship thee."

Hurt is no worshiper of gain. His asking price is in the seven-figure class now, but he took little more than expenses, and a percentage in the risky profits, to star in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. He plays Molina, the imprisoned homosexual window

JACK KROLL *is a film and drama critic for* Newsweek. *This is his first piece for Esquire.*

dresser who teaches his cellmate, Valentin (Raul Julia), the macho revolutionary, something about commitment and love. The performance won him the 1985 Academy Award for Best Actor. Characteristically, Hurt insists that he won the Oscar not for his talent but for his "ethics", for bringing dignity and compassion to his portrait of a victim of an oppressive regime. "I've reversed the typical growth pattern," says Hurt. "I've become an ethical person before becoming a fine actor. Humanity is greater than art."

A few weeks before, at his West Side apartment, Hurt's vivid account of the making of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* in Brazil with director Hector Babenco had given a dramatic glimpse of his working method, his personality, and the moral energy he hurls into every performance. "What I really wanted to do with Molina was much broader than what I did," said Hurt. "I wanted to play him almost as a kind of Medea, with a torrent of grotesque anger. I wanted him to fling those ugly stereotypes about homosexuals right back in people's faces." Leaping to his feet, Hurt proceeded to undulate with the absurd grace of an androgynous giraffe, and spat out in the kicked-bitch tones of Molina: "'All right, this is what you think I am, so this is what I will be.' But it scared the shit out of everybody. Hector said, 'I just can't go with that.'"

Accepting a "quieter" interpretation of Molina, Hurt had started rehearsals with Raul Julia. But things were going very badly. "We were up against a wall," recalled Hurt. "One day Hector had to go off to a meeting, but I said, 'We're not getting through, we've got to keep going.' I asked Hector if we could rehearse without him. He said yes. I told Raul, 'Let's just lie down and do whatever we want.' We weren't getting anywhere, it was a mess, we felt icky.

"So I said, 'Okay, let's just switch roles.' It's tricky, you have to trust the other person, because when he plays your role he's gonna be telling you how you should play it, and you don't like being told what to do. So I told Raul we could pull the plug on this anytime either one of us felt threatened. Well, we just flew. Raul was the one who took off first. I was dazzled by his flamboyance, his freedom of movement, his charm and love and sensuality. So I took up the gauntlet, and I made that revolutionary one tough son of a bitch. I took it right to him—'You make me sick when I look at you!' And I started to fly because we were giving each other what we needed from each other."

Exulting in the breakthrough, Hurt went racing to find Babenco. "'Look,' I said, 'no one has seen this movie. Maybe no one ever will. We've tried me playing Molina, Raul playing the macho guy. It's not gonna work that way. So let's switch.' Hector said no, 'No way.' Thank God! So we went back and played. This time we had so much more information, we were so much more giving to each other. We understood the dimensions of the characters so much better. It takes generosity to do that. I don't know if I have it, but I know that Raul does."

When he accepted his Oscar, Hurt announced he shared the award with Julia. It was the high point of a still young career, but Hurt almost didn't experience it. He didn't want to attend the Academy Award show; actors, he felt, don't compete with one another. "I was getting really self-righteous," he said. "But in reality I was afraid—the most typical forms of fear are self-righteousness and boredom. It was Steve Spielberg who set me straight. He told me it was a big deal and I should go. So I was able to defuse that demon and enjoy it for what it is. If people are going to honor you, how dare you not accept that?"



Scenes from* Children of a Lesser God: *Hurt tries to communicate.

Bill Hurt's early life featured wide, disruptive swings—from the South Pacific, where his father worked for the State Department, to a small Manhattan apartment with his mother after his parents were divorced, to a twenty-two-room apartment when his mother married Henry Luce III, son of the founder of Time, Inc. He majored in theology for his first three years at Tufts University in Massachusetts before switching to theater, deciding that "religion does not represent humanity anymore." Hurt now thinks that he went into theology because "I was trying to earn my stepfather's love. He was a highly religious man."

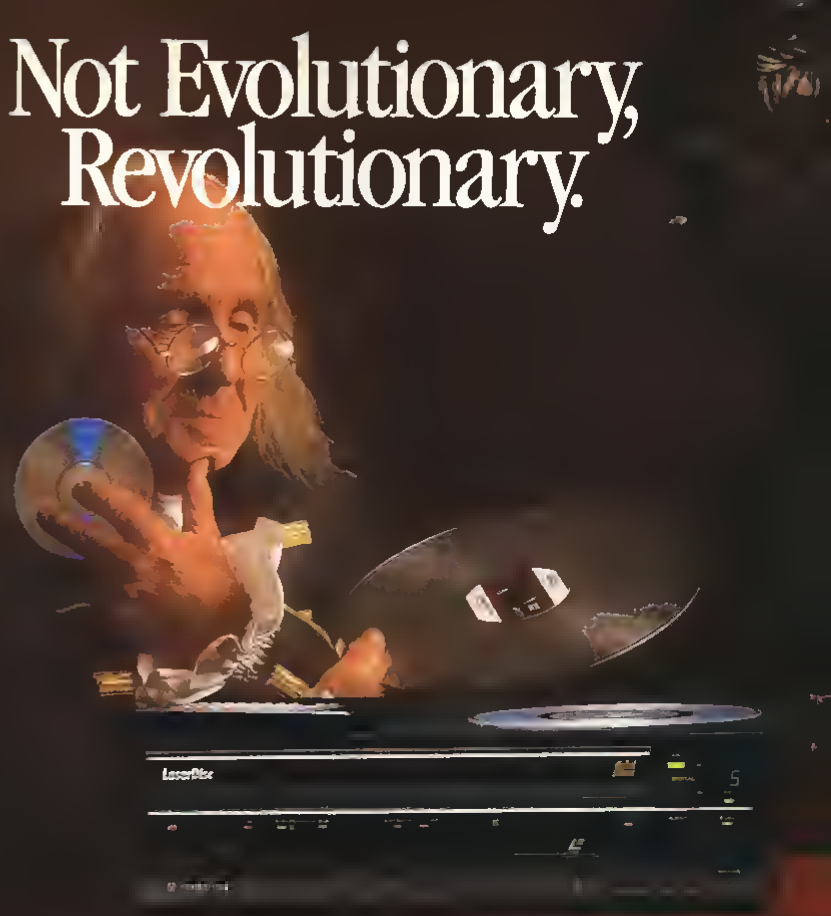
There were other loves. He married the young actress, Mary Beth Hurt, and went into acting, facing the choice between training in America or England. He chose America because, as he put it, "I preferred the passion that seeks the form rather than the form that seeks the passion." After two years' study at New York's Juilliard School, passion and form got entangled. Hurt chafed under the school's discipline, his marriage grew shaky (he is now divorced), and his mother died. Hopping on a motorcycle, Hurt traveled all the way to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon, where he played Edmund in Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*. "I have no compunction about saying I was the best Edmund there ever was," he declares, putting aside his usual humility.

Since then he has put together a string of performances that for superb quality and consistency are rivaled only by De Niro and Streep—and Hurt stands alone in moving regularly between the theater and movies. For twelve years he has been a member of the off-Broadway Circle Repertory Company in New York where for about $200 a week he has played roles ranging from Hamlet to a homosexual paraplegic Vietnam veteran in Lanford Wilson's *Fifth of July*.

On film, Hurt became an instant star with his first movie, *Altered States*, as a Harvard scientist who searches for the beginning of life and breaks into the evolutionary track, metamorphosing first into an ape-man, then a beam of light. That role is a metaphor for Hurt himself, whose mind is part mystical, part scientific. When I first met him several years ago, he said things like "Our representative religion in Western culture is physics." He said a lot of other things in his now-notorious Williamese, which I had been warned by acquaintances was impenetrable, but which I found often piercing and almost always touching in its restless probing toward ape- or light-truth. A few days later, I arrived at my office after lunch to find Hurt

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sitting quietly outside my office. He had been walking, he said apologetically, when he suddenly thought of some ideas he simply had to transmit to someone, and I was the nearest receiver.

Now, at the Italian restaurant, the cannelloni dead, the wine quick, he was transmitting again. He had just returned from a fly fishing trip to New Hampshire, where he has a house. He described how he had "flailed the water" vainly for an hour and then, his arm muscles in spasms, had watched while a companion, an expert flycaster, just stood up and flicked a perfect cast over a trout's nose.

This Hemingwayesque vignette triggers a twenty-year-old memory, from the time Hurt spent summers with his natural father after his parents were divorced. "I used to be a hunter then, when I was sixteen. But the day I stopped even dreaming about hunting was a day in Somaliland when a friend of my father's took me out with him. He took my father's old .303 Lee-Enfield, a classic military gun that Kipling wrote about. It was very powerful, very accurate, a really great gun. Unfortunately, it kills things. My father had a scope mounted on it and this guy laid it on the hood of a Land Rover. There was a gazelle that, it turned out later, was five-sixths of a mile away. And he nailed it. And I decided that I was never going to hunt that way in my life. It was too distant, too abstract."

Hurt is the least abstract of actors. As Renko, the Soviet homicide investigator in *Gorky Park*, he tries to serve justice in an authoritarian regime. Hurt sees this film as a confrontation between good and evil, the latter represented by Lee Marvin as a slick American who combines greed, lechery, and murder in one well-tailored persona. Though Hurt scrupulously avoids badmouthing his colleagues, he nonetheless insists that the makers of the film "raped the screenwriter," Dennis Potter. "He's one of the greatest writers ever," says Hurt. "But in most movies the writer is raped from inception, right down the line. It's unbelievable." In the struggle to save Potter's concept of "a morality play" from the producers who just wanted "more car chases," Hurt claims Lee Marvin as an ally. 'My first day on the set with Lee, he walked up to me and said, 'How long have you been dealing with this?' I said, 'Six weeks.' He said, 'Okay, as long as I'm here I'll guard your flanks so you can go ahead and try to act.' And he did."



"God didn't put us here to understand what's going on."

Hurt's colleagues do not necessarily return his praise so generously. Potter wrote an article for one of the English Sunday papers about the making of *Gorky Park* in which he described one of the actors as a man "with both paddles out of the water." As for Marvin, he reportedly told one cast member who claimed to have belted Hurt in an altercation: "Good man, you saved me the trouble."

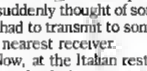
His positive attitude toward his *Gorky Park* co-workers remains unshaken. He not only calls Potter a great artist but a great man. And he admits—no, he insists—that Marvin "acted the hell out of his scenes. He acted better than I did. Instead of trying to beat him, which was of course not my job, I wanted to let this person teach me. Let me be Good and him be Evil, and my goodness will be how much I can learn from him. Because he's going to shoot at me every precious thing he ever learned. And he did—on so many levels you wouldn't believe."

Hurt is uncomfortable with the idea of the solitary, self-centered star. "You won't find true transcendence until you find characterization in ensemble," he says. "Renko says, 'Reporting for duty, sir.' In a way that's what I'm doing as an actor until someone gives me a shot at that ensemble. Someoody gave me a shot in *Altered States* to be part of a great idea. Somebody gave me a shot in *Body Heat* to be part of a great structure. Someoody gave me a shot in *Spider Woman* to be part of a great characterization. When is someone going to give me a shot at all of it? When am I going to be just a member of the company?"

Of all his pictures, the one with the strongest company feeling was *The Big Chill*, Lawrence Kasdan's group portrait of friends left high and dry by the burnt-out Sixties revolution. Hurt's character is the most scorched of all, a man left impotent by the Vietnam War, a drug dealer whose cynicism Hurt makes more desolate by a seeming quietness that evokes the balked energy of an entire generation. But Hurt thinks he came closer to the ideal of ensemble acting in David Rabe's play *Hurlyburly*—a savage comedy about Hol-

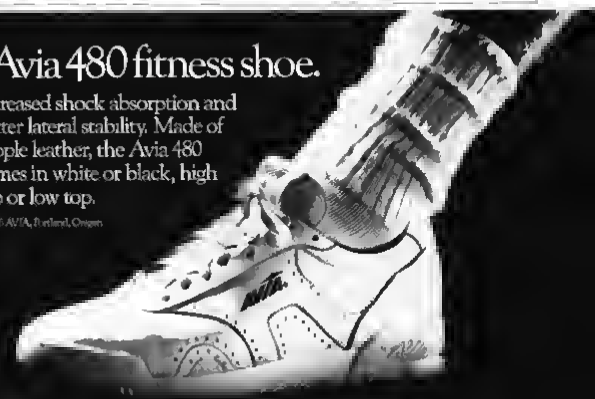
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lywood types whose original Broadway cast was an ensemble that included, besides Hurt, Christopher Walken, Sigourney Weaver, Harvey Keitel, Judith Ivey, Jerry Stiller, and Cynthia Nixon. "Every night Chris Walken was giving me a true moral challenge," says Hurt. Yet one night I visited the dressing room and heard Keitel dismiss the idea of the ensemble as sentimental nonsense, claiming that everyone, including himself, was up there for his own glory.

If that's true, it confirms Hurt's idealism. But he's an idealist grounded in reality. His performances seem to come from a quiet center in that tall body. As the slightly seedy lawyer in *Body Heat*, he has you tasting his self-deception as he falls hopelessly for Kathleen Turner. Their love scenes are elegantly carnivorous, two gorgeous organisms barbecuing each other in the sweet-and-sour sauce of despair. In *Eyewitness*, as the disillusioned Vietnam vet who has dropped out and becomes a janitor, his comic proposition to Sigourney Weaver, a detailed offer to buff her floor, manages to be both funny and touching.

It's hard to find a precedent for Hurt's quietly astonishing style, so natural and knowing. He hates the Method. "We're not schizophrenics. You are not there to cathart personal angst in front of somebody." He doesn't sell his personality, and he hasn't created an unmistakable screen persona like a Jimmy Stewart or a Humphrey Bogart. His closest predecessor may be Robert Redford, that other golden WASP with an apparently effortless style. Still, there's a touch of Narcissus about Redford; it's part of his appeal. But as an actor, Hurt manages to combine glamour and power with no trace of self-absorption.

Maybe that's why Hurt seems to be suspicious of all "technique." "God didn't put us here to *understand* what's going on," he insists. "You're supposed to explore and change and experience and risk and live. The part of understanding that implies compassion is the good part. The bad part of understanding is the control part, the manipulation part, the power part. Some people understand in order to control, while other people understand to allow and accept and forgive. There's a big difference."

Then, as if he's just heard himself, Hurt says, "We gotta lighten up. I wish Robin Williams was here." Williams, one of his fellow students, is a close friend (as are other Juilliard alumni, such as Christopher Reeve and Kevin Kline). Hurt needs Williams's subversive irreverence to deflate his own metaphysical ramblings. Williams is the president of the Bozos, an informal association that includes Kline, Reeve, and Whoopi Goldberg. "Bozoness," says Hurt, "is a fleeting, wispy quality, but it's also a serious occupation. It's Robin Williams on the Oscar telecast scaring the shit out of [Motion Picture Association president] Jack Valenti."

I ask him about Alex, his three-and-a-half-year-old son by his former girlfriend, ballet dancer Sandra Jennings. "Oh, is this the personal-life question now?" asks Hurt. "Who's staging this? How are you structuring this?" "I haven't the foggiest idea," I reply—a sentiment Hurt understands. He breaks out into a surprisingly boyish guffaw. "Why are you here?" he cries. "Why am I here? There must be a reason." Suddenly serious again, he comes up with it. "I'm here to be the subject of your perusal. This is not my form, this is your form. You're the actor now, not me. I'm not acting now."



With Marlee Matlin: "Our feeling for each other is not a by-product of this movie. I would feel this affection for her if she were a truck driver."

Not acting maybe, but being a movie star is still a full-time job. For an hour now, the waiters have been buzzing the table like PT boats, exchanging smiles, nods, and mystified shrugs as they catch some of Hurt's impassioned declamations. One of them approaches shyly and says, "Mr. Hurt, may I take your picture?" Hurt looks at him as if questioning the validity of his own celebrity. "No," he says. The waiter's smile tilts and widens. "Thank you," he says sincerely, and Hurt, without skipping a beat, begins to answer the "personal life" questions.

One of his heroes, the great English director Peter Brook, recently asked whether Hurt would want to participate in his famous international company based in Paris. "I had to turn it down," says Hurt. "I can't be away from my son. Five years ago I would have jumped at the offer. But I have to be able to see Alex once in a while. I want him to know that his father is at least a recurrent entity in his life. The demands of my work, the accidents of my relationship with his mom, my personal vagaries, my shyness and imagination are self-evident. And they must cost him. They cost me. Passing up that kind of opportunity costs me a lot."

Marlee Matlin, Hurt's girlfriend and the costar of his upcoming film, *Children of a Lesser God*, is a twenty-year-old actress who exudes delicacy and strength. She is also deaf. "Marlee has a remarkable clarity," Hurt says. "I've been waiting for her a long time."

Making the film, based on Mark Medoff's play about a teacher of the deaf who falls in love with one of his students, was a revelation for Hurt. "The central metaphor," he says, "is to learn how to listen. People don't listen to one another. The teacher is the guy who's really deaf. He's deaf to the girl, deaf to love. The teacher is the cripple." True to his passionate approach, Hurt would wander around the set proclaiming these sentiments to the director, the crew, and the cast, who were young people from a school for the deaf. As Hurt went around explaining to everyone the true metaphor of the movie, the crew members, he says, reacted with tough cynicism. "'Oh, here we go,' they'd say, 'we've got ourselves a real star, a debutant.' But after a while everybody relaxed and accepted me."

Learning to sign was not easy for Hurt. "You're signing for yourself as you speak to the kids," he maintains. "You're speaking for them as they sign. Your hands are flying around, your mouth is going. So you're playing three or four roles at the same time.

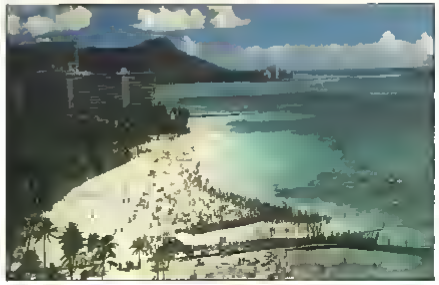
"The real joy was to work with the kids," says Hurt. "You can't keep 'em down." But even here, Hurt's methods were not always immediately understood by the deaf youngsters. "At one of the rehearsals I wasn't coming through to one of the kids. I was trying to make him understand that acting is connecting, and that we were going to connect on some level somehow, someway. This guy was giving me real shit. If he behaved that way in school he'd be thrown out. So, as an eccentric, imaginative teacher, how do I keep the guy in school, make him behave? We got into this fistfight, rolling around and wrestling on the floor. And I finally got through, he came up and shook my hand."

But it was Hurt who had the most to learn from his new colleagues—especially Marlee Matlin. She had played a small role in *Children of a Lesser God* at the world famous National Theatre of the Deaf before getting the lead in her first film. "Marlee is a courageous person," says Hurt. "She knows herself. She has great temperament and she uses it. That would be remarkable in anyone, but in someone so young it's amazing." The two communicate in a combination of signing and lip reading. "When she puts in her hearing aid, Marlee is technically hard-of-hearing," Hurt explained. "But when she takes out the hearing aid, she's what's known as profoundly deaf.

"What bothered me," said Hurt, "was that anyone would see our professional relationship as having resulted in a personal relationship. I would have felt this affection for her if she were a truck driver. Our feeling for each other is our own, and not a by-product of this movie." Still, like the girl in the film, Marlee is gutsy, and Hurt admires that. "She's not afraid of flagrance and outrageousness like so many people are," he said. "We hammer away at each other and then we're free of it. Marriage? I don't know. It might be. She's young, but that doesn't bother her and it doesn't bother me. People grow at different rates. But we're great together."

Weeks later now, at the restaurant, Marlee has come to mean even more to Hurt. He had just watched her rehearsing a monologue, a personal story, for the National Theatre of the Deaf. "I'm jealous of Marlee," says Hurt. "My work comes after a long period of neurosis, she does it without neurosis. Watching her do that monologue was one of the most beautiful moments of my life. I'm sitting there reading a book. She's beginning to sign her story. I was in awe, not only of the beauty of her signing, but her physical beauty too. She had jumped the barrier between communication and manipulation."

That is the barrier that Bill Hurt wants to jump. "I feel unfinished," he says. "Look at this shirt, it's brand-new but it's missing a button." He pokes a hand through the gap, revealing a pale patch of skin. "Look at this. It's soft. I'm healthy but not hard, I'm strong but not calloused. As far as I'm concerned I'm still learning. Maybe in my early forties I'll get there. I'm not an artist yet. But I wish to be one someday. I don't want anything to stop it." ●



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AN ESQUIRE DOUBLE FEATURE

Harrison Ford and the Jungle of Gloom

The adventure king stalks legitimacy in the wilds of Belize

by Guy Martin

Harrison Ford stands in a cow pasture with the cockiness of a jock who hasn't yet gone to seed—butt out, gut out, swaybacked, predatory in manner, bursting with health. He's costumed with a certain perverse wit in baggy black chinos, old white sneakers, and a faded Hawaiian shirt sporting bucolic scenes of tropical life: outriggers pounding through the surf, hula girls rampant, huts on the beach.

He's been in the jungles of Belize for three months, where he's filming *The Mosquito Coast*, a Jerome Hellman/Saul Zaentz production based on the Paul Theroux novel of that name. This week the company wraps the jungle work. Ford plays the brilliant, muleheaded inventor Allie Fox, who flees the States with his wife and kids, ostensibly to make a simpler life in the Honduran jungle. Allie is a sort of adrenalated Ben Franklin, a can-do crank complete with pinchpenny aphorisms and stunning arrogance. His most extraordinary invention, the thing into which he breathes his spirit, is an ice factory called Fat Boy. Because he is such a grand figure of a guy, Allie decides to bestow ice and with it his own version of paradise on the jungle, whether the jungle likes it or not. Allie's problem is that he's a little too willing to crush bodies in his dash for the door to nirvana. *The Mosquito Coast*, opening next month, is the first film in which Harrison Ford plays a lead character who dies.

Ford is in the cow pasture because director Peter Weir wants a close-up of Ford's face. Cast and crew have spent the heat of the day at the main set near a village called Gracey Rock, but this close-up, to be used in a scene on the beach, cannot be had in the fading jungle light. Two flat-bottomed skiffs ferry Weir, Ford, and a skeleton crew across the Sibun River to a cow pasture. There the sun on Ford's face will be made to match the sun on the beach.

Ford is said to have put on some weight during this film, but if that is true, it seems to fit. When he looks around, he reveals himself in an uncomplicated way, as clear to read as a golden retriever, and when he is thinking he bends his neck and stares at the ground as if he's listening to a coach tell him to go bust some linebacker's ass. His neck is strong and thick, with a huge jib of an Adam's apple. The neck is not out of proportion. Ford is around six feet tall, maybe taller, with blue eyes and stiff, dirty-blond hair combed straight back. After three months in Belize, his skin is the color of a freshly baked brick.

The close-up is technical work, perhaps a twelve-second shot during which Ford must think, or appear to think, about his life. This is not particularly difficult; Ford thinks about his life all the time.

Historically, he has not been what you could call a gambling man. He takes risks with his stuff now because he can afford it, because it feeds him, because he's got balls. Harrison Ford is definitely not conquering the jungle with a bullwhip in this picture. He's also not sitting around his trailer sticking pins in Han Solo dolls—he's too smart to try to eradicate the past; he just wants to change his present. Despite his fame as an Entertainment Hero, or because of it, he wants *The Mosquito Coast* to be a serious shot of work.

Weir says, "What was difficult about this was to reverse the classic, let's say, American-hero situation, which to my viewing of pictures is the story of a loner who's made whole through a film, as in *Witness*. Here the tradition lies more with the classics, particularly with Shakespeare and the Greeks, where you take someone who's whole and then reveal flaws and you accentuate that, and they... collapse."

Weir has come into Ford's career as an intercession, a choice. It had to happen sometime—Ford is too complicated a fellow to spend his life in cartoons—but the brainy, lyrical Weir is a curious match. Strictly by chance, Weir took the job of directing *Witness* eight weeks before production began. It was a project for which both men received their first Oscar nominations. Ford retreated, as is his habit between movies, and a year later decided to go with Weir for the next step, a film in which he is to be stripped of any normal Hollywood-hero status. No doubt it would have been easier for him if he weren't so famous for whomping bad guys every time he appeared on screen.

They do a take in the pasture. Ford studies the air with his mouth slightly open, looks at the family down the beach, looks down. Both the director and the actor seem to regard it as a warm-up.

Ford smiles evenly at Weir, who is on one knee in the pasture. "Ahhhh, that's fine, Pete, but could you bend down a little farther towards the ground?"

Weir obliges, gingerly checking the grass for manure. He smiles. He's being directed by one of his actors to put his face in a pile of shit.

Ford coaxes with the palest shade of irony, "Just a little bit farther now, Peter...no, really, it would help me a great deal."

Weir laughs.

The second take is quite luxurious. Ford shakes his head to wake up, stoops, picks up some flotsam, and rubs the back of his neck, as self-absorbed as a pig rooting around in a trough. He turns his head and a tendon on the left side of his neck pops out. He works his wolf-snarl smile across his face. Everything is jake with Allie. But Ford lets us see a wigged-out science wonk who derives pleasure from holding a piece of garbage.

Weir is pleased. They do one more take to give themselves something a little quieter, and then the crew straggles back down to the riverbank with the equipment. There's coough room in the ferries only if the people stand. Ford steps into the prow of one boat, and as it backs into the stream he begins to strip. Underneath his Allie Fox costume he wears a bright-royal-blue

GUY MARTIN *is a contributing editor of Esquire. His profile of Ray Charles appeared in the May issue.*

Photograph by George Hurrell



Speedo. The women in the boat pretend not to watch. Everybody pretends not to watch. When the skiff has turned out into the current, he jumps into the chalky-green river and swims with a steady breast-stroke for the other shore. He looks like a strong land animal swimming, like a horse or a bear. In one move he slips out of the water and up the bank. Then he walks dripping and barefoot out of the jungle.

Ford says, "Hey, let's get something to eat," casually, into the air. He has a big voice to match that Adam's apple of his. There materializes a Belizean driver, an equatorial edition of Mr. T: solid arms, bearded, large amounts of gold around his neck, heavily modern sunglasses, white athletic socks up to his knees. Ford introduces this man as Robert Lincoln, his driver. Ford suggests Macy's Cafe, a little Creole joint off Albert Street on the south side of town. We get into a sleek navy Sierra with smoked-glass windows, and with Ford riding shotgun we nose through the shabby little town.

The first thing Ford says in the Sierra is, "You know I came here and drove around some last year and just sort of got this idea, I mean, I like to dive; what about a boat?"

He explains that for the last three months he and his wife, the screenwriter Melissa Mathison, have been living on a boat. We talk some about diving, which is pretty spectacular on Belize's 150-mile-long barrier reef. Then Ford turns around in his seat and says deadpan, beleaguered, "So it's okay that I have a boat?"

This is humorous, the man asking my permission to live in a certain way. It's done with the acknowledgment that he wants to control the way he is perceived. He knows it's funny, but he's not officially letting on, plus, joking aside, he wants some kind of up-front imprimatur. Not much of this dance makes sense to me.

"Ahhhh, sure man, great. I think it's fine you have a boat." I won't understand Ford's jumpiness for several days, until somebody in town points out the *Mariner III*, a 122-foot fantail motor yacht of mid-Twenties vintage, with Baccarat lead-crystal windows and a few miles of teak trim. One expects to see FDR being wheeled about the stern with his cigarette holder clenched at the requisite parade angle. I think maybe even Ford expects to find FDR on board, or at the very least a fat film mogul, which is why he's a little shy about the boat. It would be disheartening if he weren't.

But the *Mariner III*'s comic opulence obscures the fact that the boat is a vehicle for escape. Ford's charter of it is an act of privacy, a rare enough commodity in his life. One way he has found to purchase more of it—the strategy of so many of the excruciatingly famous—is simply to keep moving. One presents the smallest, fastest target to the world in order to preserve something of oneself.

If, as Ford suggests, moviemaking is "a series of slow accidents," then his own odd duck resume has prepared him perfectly for it. The son of a New York adman, Ford decided to go to California upon flunking out of Wisconsin's Ripon College shortly before graduation. It was 1965. He wanted to be an actor. He was given a $150-a-week contract by Columbia Pictures, forced into a skinny tie and a pompadour, and made his debut in something called *Dead Heat on a Merry-Go-Round*. He did some late-Sixties TV, stalled, became a carpenter for the better part of a decade. Then he got a small, chewy role in young George Lucas's *American Graffiti*.



Scenes from The Mosquito Coast: *Ford as Allie Fox with his on-screen family*

PHOTOGRAPHS–NANCY ELLISON/SYGMA

He claims he backed into "the swashbuckling thing" because of Lucas, but once he started he kept on going. He fought his way through space, two jungles, the future, and a desert: *Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980), *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Return of the Jedi* (1983), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984). Not exactly Lord Olivier's career, but there is a strange humor to all this, and a winning austerity that Ford brings even to his most trivial stuff. With *Witness* (1985), Ford began to turn his swashbuckling thing into something altogether different.

Ford and I arrive at Macy's during the lunch crush and so are jammed at a table near the door with another patron, an older Creole woman busy sucking some unrecognizable bones. The owner, Sam, solicitously drops by to tell us the special of the day is deer. He says he had some gibnut, but there is none left. Gibnut is a jungle rodent that Sam makes into a dark, flavorful stew. Sam makes most meats—except for fish—into dark, flavorful stews. We order deer.

Ford muses, "Deer and beer."

It soon arrives. Sam serves his plates with slaw, rice, beans, and pepper relish that in proper Creole style will burn a swath through your gastrointestinal tract well into the following week. Ford, an experienced hand with this stuff, sprinkles it over his plate as if it were plutonium. We talk about Los Angeles for a while, where Ford spends about half the year with his sons from his first marriage, Willard and Ben, ages seventeen and twenty. He mentions in passing, twice, that he is forty-three.

Ford has recently purchased a retreat, a ranch in a Rocky Mountain state that he names with the nearest town merely as a point of geographical identification. Then he catches himself and says, "But I'd like to ask you not to print that. It's not marked or anything, but we already have people standing outside the gate. And I've started getting mail addressed simply to Harrison Ford, care of His Ranch, with just the name of the state after that."

Perhaps the main thing Ford does with this ranch, aside from escaping there himself, is to provide a refuge for animals. "I spend a lot of my time talking with biologists and fish-and-game guys. I spent six months building a house for my family; built some barns and roads. You know, gentleman-farmer shit. Which is a most pleasant and necessary change from"—he looks around, implying the job at hand—"from this."

Ford designates Robert to return the Sierra while he walks me back through the funky clapboard streets. We leave abruptly. Ford has a forceful, contained way of walking mixed with a bit of stealth so that strangers have difficulty recognizing him, and when they do, his momentum makes it

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difficult for them to approach. It's probably more effective in a country where he has a chance to blend in, but in Belize, by now, he stands out triply, first as a white, then as a member of the film crew, then as the star.

As Ford rounds the corner into Albert Street, a few of the town's cool-running Rastamen recognize him, and one of them says from his cathke loungung place in a doorway, "'Arrisonford," one word, to let him know.

Ford says, "Hey," and motors up the street without breaking stride.

He walks down Albert Street, past the town market, over the bridge, and through the dust of North Front Street to the production office, where he suggests that we go sit by the pool of the Fort George Hotel. The Fort George is a generic Fifties British colonial edifice with tiled balconies, aqua walls, wood totems flanking the door, fanlike wicker chairs in the lobby. The place seems more like an East African tourist trap than one in Central America.

"All right," he says, shouldering up to the bar, "I believe we can do this."

He means talk. We sit facing each other with a stool between us and order beer. He keeps his sunglasses on.

"I don't... I mean, this is not anybody's... this is no refined theory of acting, I'm not... ahhh, I'm not gonna write a *book*. Because I really don't think I know anything about this acting shit in general. I've said that I'm from the 'Let's Pretend School of Acting' kid know like," he tenses his face and notches his big voice higher, to sound like a kid, "'Let's-get-some-stuff-outta-the-closet-an'-we-can-pretend-that-we re-ahhh—' whatever. That's where I'm from. I just get dressed up and pretend I'm somebody else. And I find that if that person displays strong emotion or struts about, then people call that acting. Whereas if that person just sits around and registers ideas, they don't think as much of that as acting. Well, it's *all* the same to me."

Ford is a qualifier, he handles words as if they might explode. He uses rough pauses to buy time to edit his next sentence. Though he delivers plenty of information, it's done sotto voce, low to the ground, and one has the sense of a sharp blade he could use but has decided to keep sheathed.

Some girls come to sit at the other end of the bar to giggle and point at him. They are very young and trying as hard as they can to spill out of their bathing suits. He concentrates, looking down, so that they will go away. They go away. "A lot of movies are faulted by the fact that they talk about what you see... so that if you don't get on with the story quickly, then you're in deep trouble. Story is... ahhh, I mean, I like to see a narrative thread running through something, it's the greatest, it's—it's the bones." A pause. "If you've read anything about me—"

"I haven't."

"Good. Then you'll think what I'm feeding you is new."

Now Ford needs a cigarette. Neither of us has any. I offer to buy him some in the lobby, and he nods. Then he says, "I'm coming with you," and that's puzzling, but then it becomes clear that if he sits alone he will be approached.

He says, "I find I smoke on movie sets. I need weak cigarettes. Here." He selects a pack of Colonials, a Belizean knockoff of Camel filters. "These are incredibly weak, they're made of reconstituted tobacco."

He waits until we're back at the bar to light up, and then he slouches on his stool, palming his smoke and looking like he expects to be caught breaking training.



"You have to seduce an audience. You can't beat 'em, and you can't kiss their asses."

He says, "I don't think of the audience as someone separate from me. You have to seduce an audience with something they recognize; you can't beat 'em, and you can't kiss their asses. You can grab them by their basest instincts, you can also grab them by their highest, loftiest notions of their goodness and worth. To me that's a far more successful entertainment than that which is about"—here Ford laughs softly, like a man who has seen what he is talking about a few times—"revenge and rape and badness. Tit-flash-die movies."

"What?"

"Forget it." Then he enunciates, absolutely flat, "Tit-flash-die movies. Tit." He pulls up his T-shirt with his right hand, points at a nipple with his left. "Those movies where as soon as the girl takes her clothes off, you know she's gonna die."

Ford is reluctant to talk about his relationship with Weir partly out of propriety and partly, like any gambler, because he doesn't want to queer his luck. He sits poised, editing what he's about to say. He kneads his hands, rubbing his right hand in his left like a farmer whose hand is sore from gripping a tool all day. He doesn't seem to notice that he kneads his hands.

"I hate to use the word collaboration, I mean, it is absolutely a director's medium," he says emphatically. "And I think it gets bent out of shape, horribly, when actors take it over. Most actors are nervous. I like to have concerns resolved, but at the same time I like to work for a director. I depend on him to tell me how far he wants me to go. I have to approach this from the point of view of playing Allie Fox in the movie Peter wants to make. My vision is... ahhh, *was* and *is* probably a lot less interesting than Peter's, which is not as involved in the practical details or as chained to logic as I sometimes find myself. I thought this guy should be older, for example; I wanted to shave my head. But I was very comfortable with what Peter was able to explain to me about how he wanted the film to work. I'm uncomfortable with the word *stretch* in the sense that one does or does not do things for the roles themselves. I mean, I'm interested in what the picture is saying. It's the film I wanna do, then the part, then the people I wanna work with."

Ford exhales a thin blue stream of smoke. "It's too hard to do this job just for money. I've made films for money, but I haven't done one in a long time."

It is hot in this jungle, hot and nasty as baboons in estrus, liquid hot. The rains are about to begin, and the sun bears down with actual weight. Ford stands in the sun at the northern edge of the set, relaxed, squinting at the set through wire rims that are too small for his face. He is expansive, wanting to get the work done but not pressing, not anxious. He lets his hands fall. His hands curl at his hips in that same farmer's way, but he is not kneading them. One senses the absence of a tool.

This week is death week for Allie Fox's paradise. Since this story is about his unraveling, Peter Weir must unravel the man's handiwork. Allie himself will continue to live for a while, but his jungle home must burn to the ground.

"Lotta heavy symbolism around here, man," says a crew member. "Peter's got a lotta stuff on his mind."

To record the destruction narratively, Weir and his crew burn the homestead piecemeal, over a period of days. Fat Boy goes first, because, of course, Fat Boy is Allie's main idea.

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that is his mistake. They fire their weapoos to get out, and the place blows. This in turn ignites the house. Today, Weir must take Allie and his family through the destruction.

The real fires have not been enough. The crew spent the past two days charring the unburnt part of the set with flamethrowers, and what they couldn't blacken that way they sprayed with heavy, pungent oil. It's a slash-and-burn job worthy of Pol Pot; nothing is left untouched, even the dirt is black. The tall cotton trees nearest the flames have let go their leaves, which litter the ground like giant flash-fried spiders.

The family walks single file, in a funeral procession of sorts, across the set. They follow Allie, who is on a beeline for Fat Boy. The job requirement for this scene is that the actors look stunned, not much of a problem in this black hole. The takes are short and the crew is very crisp under Weir, so there isn't much setup time between shots. The actors stand between takes doing the things they must do to stay focused. They look at different parts of the ground with the superstition of baseball pitchers. Ford socializes in a jaunty way, fences with the crew, bums cigarettes, his mind in this world, his body still very much Allie's. When it comes time to shoot, he puts on the rest of his character like a suit.

Weir, on the other hand, is almost priestly, going about his chores, quiet, inwardly turned. He is a lean, elegant man, with sandy brown hair and a thin face whose leading edge is a prominent Roman nose. His work clothes are unstudied but well-worn; he looks like a young Oxford don on an archaeological dig. Today he wears jeans, paddock boots, and a spectacularly shabby khaki canvas hat with a leather band. He smokes Kools.

Weir is rather famous for his fluid approach on set, pressing the crew, but gently, willing to accept innovation from any quarter. He shows some mettle when he's approached about it, as if he's been called a nice fellow somewhat too often. He says, "You know, you hear of a Stanley Kubrick who is cerebral, or a Woody Allen who is remote, or Fred and Jane who are — whatever. The curious thing is that has got nothing to do with it. I mean the final thing is to get the shot. Now I'm a tremendous believer in craft, but there are times when all you can do is prepare yourself to take advantage of the accidents."

After lunch the actors are called to the bridge between the house and Fat Boy. In general, Ford exhibits military punctuality when called, and now, just at that point in the afternoon when folks are starting to drag, his execution is resolutely crisp.

"Munchkins!" he calls. "Where are the Munchkins?"

Allie's daughters appear, played by the impossibly tiny Gordon twins, barefoot, white-skinned, carrot-topped, as fragile-looking as Dresden china in a war zone. Ford stands on the bridge, holding the hand of one of the twins, and salutes Weir with a perfectly worn, young-officer-bucking-for-promotion voice.

"Action team ready, sir!"

Weir smiles. "Well done. Stand by."

There is some time. The twin whose hand Ford is holding loses concentration, as might be expected of an eight-year-old. She takes both of Ford's hands, and he looks down and says, "I want a finger. I collect fingers from all the kids I work with. How about this one?" The girl is flattered, so much so that her sister comes from farther down the bridge to see what this is about. They play over Ford as cubs



"I'm an actor, goddammit. I have to do this, unless enough people get together and think I'm not one. Then I'll figure out something else to do."

would play over a grizzly.

There is the sound check.

"Harrison, just say your name."

"Uhhhhhh. Michael J. Pollard."

And then we roll. Allie Fox steps off the bridge, clear, expectant, puzzled that anything he built wouldn't last forever. He looks at the river, and we can see the idea working that he has killed the river, too. He turns to the family, chin out pugnaciously.

"I know what you're thinking, I admit it, I did a terrible thing. I polluted this place. And I'm a murderer."

The voice carries like a baritone sax, filling this hole in the jungle with a sort of moan. In this take, he lands hard and live on the word *murderer*, as if that's the worst he could say about himself. In the next, he colors the word *admit* in a far more arrogant way, as if having witnesses to his failure was the only thing forcing him to concede that he had failed at all. Weir strides over to give him direction, and Ford stares at the ground, concentrating.

For the next take, Ford is raspy, more strung out, and when it's time for him to stride toward the river he stalks. This is the serious, gritty part of the work, and he doesn't talk much between takes. At the same time he's not self-conscious about getting it right on the first try. He just wades in and takes another swing.

"You want one that size, Pete?"

"Yes, and then we'll do the smaller one."

The crew is quiet. Weir talks some, but he seems mostly in his head. Ford delivers the lines in a genuinely bewildered way with just a bit of the raspy undertone from the earlier take. Then he finds it. He mixes a few new things with elements of what he's already done and delivers a pure moment of fear, arrogance, hope, and blind-

ness. The people on movie sets don't often respond as an audience, but after this there is a communal pause.

Peter Weir calls brightly, "Print that."

Now Harrison Ford is primed to blast out of this country, but there's a gauntlet he has to run, as a celebrity, just to get out of the jungle. He's prowling through his trailer in the five-acre staging area at Grarey Rock, ripping open cupboards and throwing magazines, papers, and cassettes onto the couch. He moves fast, like a man late for a plane. He looks up, his eyes widening. "I'm never coming back here!" He starts and then says again, "Never!"

He grabs a cold Beikin out of the refrigerator and sits at the small table next to the window, where he begins to autograph publicity stills for members of the crew. Jark Dearlove, his trusty stand-in, has prepared a list of people to whom he owes a picture. Ford sits with the list in front of him and writes like a prisoner of war, writes so hard that his hand starts to tremble from the strain. He signs thirty pic-

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tures in absolute silence. He has an old leather-and-canvas musette. He puts the photographs in the bag, grabs an armful of beers, and sprints through the crowd to his Sierra.

Then he begins to pass out the autographed pictures. Most of the crew milis around the lot, laughing and drinking, not wanting to leave quite yet. This is the last time many of them will be in the jungle. The sky is still a daytime blue but the light on the ground is going, just fringing the canopy of a seventy-foot tamarind tree at the edge of the lot.

Ford poses with a few of the guys for snapshots, and signs a few more autographs, working his way slowly back to his car. Soon he is en route, but he is not out of the woods yet.

At a bend in the dirt road near the village is Mrs. Young's, the only restaurant, general store, free-lance car repair in Gracey Rock. Ford has eaten much from Mrs. Young's wood fire over the last three months. Mrs. Young knows his Sierra, knows who is in it, and knows that today is the last day of filming. She's waiting at the bend in the road, her doomed chickens pecking at her feet.

Ford rolls down his window.

"Oh, 'Arrison, you are leaving!"

"Yes, Mrs. Young, thank you so much."

Mrs. Young, quite a businesswoman, cuts right to the point. "What about the pictures you promised me before you go? You know I will need at least ten of them for my relatives and friends."

"I don't have any more right now." Ford jerks a thumb at me. "He's coming back out here tomorrow, I'll give some to him."

"Oh, give me a kiss, 'Arrison," and then Mrs. Young squeezes Ford's face and plants a wet one. Ford comes out of his seat a little.

"Yes, well, thank you, Mrs. Young."

"Oh, give me another, I'm going to miss you so." She does it again. "Will you come back to see us, 'Arrison?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"All right then." She doesn't want to believe the doubt in her voice.

Then we are gone, altogether out of the jungle on the dirt road, our backs to the late sun streaming at us out of Guatemala. Harrison Ford cracks a cold one. At the junction of the jungle road and the main highway is a collection of concrete buildings not on stilts. They surround a clean-swept dirt yard with an incredibly well tended flagpole standing in it.

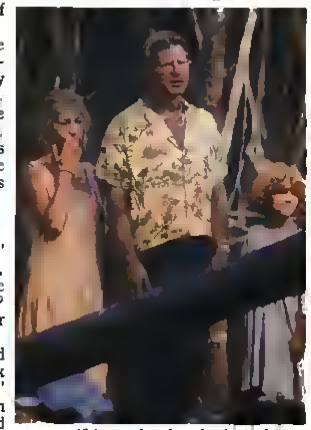
"Did you see the sign for this?" Ford asks. It is getting easier to tell when his offscreen sense of humor is in operation. There is not even a glint, usually, but a little extra slyness. "It's Rockview, the nation's single mental institution.

"Look at the bottom," says Ford. He reads, "EVERYBODY CUD CUM VISIT."

We bound through a mangrove swamp. Ford rolls down the tinted back window of the Sierra, and the sun hits his face and turns it gold. His eyes are gray in the light.

"Need a beer?" he says. Then he turns around and says, "Okay, let's get this thing done." It's as if he needs to say something like this, whenever we talk, to pump up. Ford has a way of closing his brow and hiding, making it nearly impossible to read him, and he has a way of not doing that. Today he is not doing it, even though he chafes at the suggestion of a connection between the kinds of characters he plays, rowdy boys who are swimming against some stream or other, who are not above a little Faustian deal for a larger good.

"Hey pal, the similarity is me! You know what I mean. There's nothing similar about



"It's too hard to do this job just for money. I've made films for money, but not for a long time."

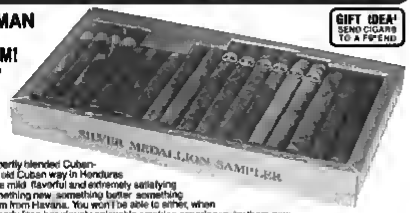
the roles, I just don't change my appearance that much from film to film." He points out the window at a passing car. "It's like, that's a Chevy, or that's a Ford? That's a Ford," he says again, enjoying the pun. "If I just have a good story! The other thing I require is that it be some subject matter that isn't exploitative, and the other thing is character. I mean, what I've already done doesn't interest me, and if there's not enough distinction between the two to make it worth the trouble, then forget it. I'm an actor, goddammit. I have to do this, unless enough people get together and think that I'm not one, and then I'll figure out something else to do."

We are heading into town on the so-called Western Highway, which runs from Belize City to the artificial Brasilia-style capital of Belmopan. The road, a spottily paved two-lane, is astonishingly bad. As Robert negotiates one of the fifteen-foot drainage pits, Ford cocks his head and intones like a high school civics teacher, "One strives to maintain the proper pro-

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We pass an odd-looking house very close to the road. The house is on stilts as is almost every building in this country, but it's made of cheap plywood, not the usual mahogany tongue-and-groove. An extra sheet of plywood protects the kitchen under the house from the eyes of travelers. Textbook poverty: washing hangs about, broken things lie in the dirt yard. A young brown girl stands by the road, proud, eyes flashing, long black hair down to her waist, a child on one hip.

Ford says, "I've always thought that girl was beautiful," with the tone of a cabdriver talking about the Brooklyn Bridge. The tiredness in his voice makes it clear that he has been on this road for a long time.

This night there are parties all over town, nooky-mad Australians sampling some of the clubs, local girls who've had crushes on crew members desperately trying to lock them down, local boys who feel they're owed something coming round to collect. Most of the more sober cast and crew stroll down to the Villa Hotel bar, the unofficial wateringhole for *Mosquito Coast*. Ford shows up with the smiling Melissa Mathison. After a couple of tequilas with the boys, Ford strolls over.

"You know, you're a spy," he says. This is all in good fun, of course, but it's like good fun with a lion in a cage. "You are all spies."

"I'm off. I'm having a drink with your wife."

"You guys are never off."

"Oh," says Melissa Mathison, amused, rubbing Ford's back as he turns to the bar, "he's just being an *actor*."

The next morning in the motor pool, sunglasses firmly fixed to his face, Ford wants to make sure I have the pictures for Mrs. Young. He knows I am going to Gracey Rock and then into the jungle.

"You know," he says, "I see those mosquito bites on your ankles. You should always wear repellent when you go out there." He opens the door to the Sierra, which Robert has humming for him in the street, is about to get in, and then turns back.

"By the way, I'm never doing this again." He flashes the famous snarling smile. The scar on his chin stretches white under his tan; it looks like some poor fool tried to wipe that smile off his face with a knife. And failed.

Everything is jake with Ford. He adds, "But don't take it personally." E



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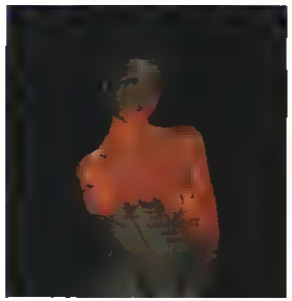
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DATELINES

FROM THE FILES OF OUR WORLD-WISE CORRESPONDENTS



PHOTO CREDITS ON PAGE 129

LONDON

In Paris and New York, the sidewalk is sovereign—in London, the house. From the meanest public housing to the Queen's palace, London is constantly teasing you with glimpses, real or imagined, into someone's living room. It is the most private of the world's capitals and the most public about its privacy. But while its domesticity beckons, it also excludes. In London, the most ubiquitous sign is FOR RESIDENTS ONLY.

For the visitor, the choice is twofold. He can stay in the West End and shop at Turnbull & Asser, Fortnum's, and the Burlington Arcade, go to the commercial theatrical hits, queue up for the Royal Opera, dine at Simpson's. He will feel safe, for the English be encounters will smile at him benevolently because he is playing his assigned part—that of the American in London doing exactly what the English expect him to do. After a few days he will grow bored, nagged by the feeling that the real London has once again evaded him.

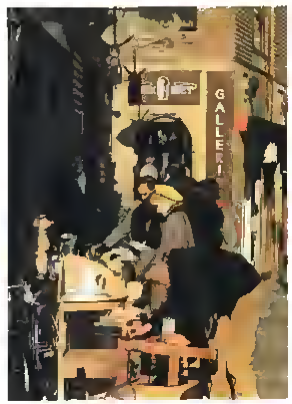
I recommend the second choice. It requires a sense of adventure, the patience to browse. It means abandoning the West End. And it, too, involves playing a part—playing Londoner.

Begin by pretending you are buying a house in one of London's most beautiful squares. It is called **Edwardes Square,** and it is tucked away just south of Kensington High Street and west of Earls Court Road. It is a dream of London life circa 1815. It shows better than any place in London the English tension between primness and extravagance, the former in the small, plain, elegantly scaled late-Georgian houses that border three sides of the square; the latter in the central, outsize garden that includes an expanse of rolling green, exotic flora from the outer limits of the Empire, and wickets set up for croquet. After you have circumnavigated the square on foot—a car can barely squeeze through its narrow thoroughfare—stop a real resident (someone with a dog) and say you have just made an offer on No. 35. If you look as though you can afford it, he will unlock the garden gate and let you inside.

The house, of course, must be furnished. English antique dealers love an American accent—the sound of money—and antique-hunting is one of the pleasanter ways to mix with the natives. Pimlico Road below Sloane Square, Camden Passage in Islington, and the western end of King's Road are the most agreeable stalking grounds, among the most promising names are **Bennison, Lennox Money, Valerie Wade, Donay, The Ark Angel, George Sherlock,** and **Charles Berenford-Clark.** If you haven't been invited to a country house for the weekend, venture out to Barnes, a village of great charm westward on the Thames, where a beautiful shop called **Portmeirion** is immensely hospitable.

The mind, the eye, and the ear must be furnished, too. The mix of Whitechapel, in London's East End, was always heady, the main attractions being **Bloom's,** the venerable kosher restaurant, the **Whitechapel Road Mosque, Petticoat Lane, Myers,** "the oldest eel stall in England," and the ghost of Jack the Ripper. Now that the art nouveau **Whitechapel Art Gallery** has been renovated into an impressive series of loft spaces hospitable to the latest fancies of today's brave new artists, the aesthetes have descended on this old trading center, and the mix is even headier.

New English plays, traditionally the glory of London's stages, have been crowded out of the West End, South Bank and Barbican venues by mindless musicals and classics revived as vehicles for a star (Vanessa Redgrave, Glenda Jackson, Peter O'Toole) and an unrestrained set designer. A brilliant exception is Christopher Hampton's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses,* adapted from the steamy French classic novel, which was the hardest ticket in the **Royal Shakespeare Company's** repertory last season and is sure to be just as hard when it arrives in the West End. Another RSC triumph is the new **Swan Theatre** in Stratford-upon-Avon, a beautiful updating of a small Elizabethan arena devoted to the rediscovery of Shakespeare's contemporaries—Jonson, Kyd, et al. But the most consistently lively theater remains on the "fringe," reliably at the



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Bush, above a pub in Shepherd's Bush, the **Almeida** in Islington, **Riverside Studios** in Hammersmith, and the **Hampstead Theatre Club** in Swiss Cottage.

London's musical offerings are unrivaled anywhere for range and sheer nightly quantity, especially for rock and classical (though first-rate jazz maintains a steady beat at **Ronnie Scott's Club**). The **Wag Club, Dingwalls,** and **Fridge** are three rock clubs dedicated to the abolition of complacency and reason. Apart from the South Bank and Barbican halls, classical fans should check who's playing or singing at **St. John's Smith Square,** the **Warwick Arts Trust** in Warwick Square, and the most distinguished of London's small concert stages, **Wigmore Hall.**

Opera? At the Royal Opera these days, too many evenings have all the zest of the changing of the guards. Things are generally more stirring at the Coliseum, where the **English National Opera** gives free rein to strong-minded directors like Jonathan Miller, digs up neglected masterworks like Busoni's *Doktor Faust,* and presents world premieres of ear- and eye-blasters like Harrison Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus.*

What happened to the punks? They now seem as rare as cockatoos in Iceland, having been nudged off the King's Road by one squeaky-clean boutique after another. London fashion has all but lost its anarchic edge. In the age of the Young Fogies, it's not just grandpa and grandma who are setting the style but great-grandpa and great-grandma (from the better classes, of course). For men, **Hackett** on New King's Road in Fulham is the mecca. There's a decent selection of new, impeccably old-hat tweed jackets, shirts, and outerwear, but the real prizes are the elegant hand-me-downs from Squire Western and his shooting pals: old walking sticks and umbrellas, binoculars in worn leather cases, deerstalkers, waistcoats, and attire suitable for the Royal Enclosure at Ascot.

And the stomach? Well yes, Virginia, there is a New English Cuisine, and it is—on the whole—to be avoided. Much of it, oversauced and feslooned with incongruities, is like eating chintz. Knowing Londoners tend to stick to the strictly ethnic. For Chinese, the upscale choice is **Mao Tai** in Fulham on New King's Road, the downscale—more authentic—choice is **Yung's** on Wardour Street. Among the omnipresent Indian restaurants, **The Bombay Brasserie** in South Kensington remains the favorite of neo-imperialists, while devotees of—and characters in—the novels of V. S. Naipaul wolf down pungent heapings in the not-so-clean but very well-lighted **Standard** in Bayswater. The most sophisticated of the fire-breathing barrage of Thai restaurants is **Tui** in South Kensington. At the suave end of the Italian spectrum, the pick is **Ponte Nuovo** on Fulham Road. For more clatter, it's **Ziani** on Radnor Walk in Chelsea.

London's greatest *haute cuisine*? It's an hour out of town in Shinfield, near Reading, where Nico Ladenis, famous for Chez Nico in South London, is striving with rather unsmiling perfectionism for three Michelin stars at his new **Chez Nico,** a converted vicarage where food is presented like Holy Communion. What about "real" English cooking? **Sweetings** on Queen Victoria Street in the City (lunch only) is where the pinstripes file in for smoked haddock with poached egg, followed by a suet-baked jam roll. **North Sea Fish Restaurant** on Leigh Street in Kings Cross is where cabbies (and more than a few foodies) go for London's most endangered edible species—fish and chips.

Weather permitting, there's always hope of a picnic. Leave Harrod's Food Halls to the Saudis and head for the shops in and around Old Compton Street in Soho. There, shops with such names as **Lina, Camisa, Torino's,** and **Vinorio** supply antidotes to the London gray in profusion—olives, salamis, roasted peppers, cheeses, crusty bread, sharp-cornered wine—all things, in other words, Italian. Nearby is the Berwick Street vegetable market, behind whose groaning stalls lurk many of Soho's sex emporia (fast being elbowed aside by Asian restaurants). To buy a brazenly empurpled eggplant while eyeing a businessman in Aquascutum ducking inside is to be reminded of Dr. Johnson's pronouncement: "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life."

—Charles Michener



PARIS

When Hemingway called Paris "a movable feast" he was talking not about its gastronomy, but the city as a dream. It has long been a dream about a dream—in this case about "the City of Light," a place where buildings glimmer, clothes shimmer, food glows, ideas bubble, and sex flickers. There is still a lot of tinsel around, but another Paris has recently emerged that is less glittering and more satisfying. It is a more democratic Paris, and if its delights are less the stuff of fantasy, they are also less likely to wake you up in the middle of the night with indigestion.

They used to talk about "Left" and "Right." Now the distinction is increasingly between "West" and "East." For the past several years, the energy flow has been in the latter direction up the Seine, most of it along the Right Bank. The catalysts have been the building of the great arts complex, the **Centre Pompidou** in the Beaubourg section, the replacement of the old Les Halles food market by the **Forum des Halles,** a high-tech development of shops, galleries, playgrounds, and restaurants; and the restoration of the pre-revolutionary neighborhood known as the **Marais,** which has become in just a few years the most civilized quarter in Paris. Most visitors to the Marais will head straight for the new **Picasso Museum,** not far from the splendidly arcaded Place des Vosges—and, if they are wise, will do so when it opens at 9:45 A.M., before the air in the poorly ventilated galleries becomes thick with the odor of culture being feverishly consumed. (A less intense but more salubrious cultural experience can be had at the nearby **Carnavalet Museum,** an opulently restored palace where the history of Paris is traced through paintings, furniture, fabric, and stamps.)

But the Marais is worth lingering in—indeed staying in—for in no other section of Paris do simplicity and sophistication mingle so easily. In the former category are such modest, comfortable hotels as the **Hôtel du 7e Art** (rue Saint Paul), which is chockablock with movie memorabilia from Hollywood's Golden Age (titles all in French), and honest, friendly café/restaurants such as **Au Gamin de Paris** on the rue Vielle du Temple, **Ma Bourgogne** on the Place des Vosges, and the legendary **La Tartine** on the rue de Rivoli, whose extensive wine cellar was reportedly sampled by Lenin and Trotsky. The legion of new sophisticates in the Marais is headed by Azzadine Alaia, the man who put shape back into fashion and recently opened an all but invisible, superminimal showroom on the rue du Pare-Royal, and Marianne Masraffs, chef at **Au Quai des Ormes** on the quai d'Hôtel de Ville, whose way with ravioli might well make an Italian think the word was French. In a category of its own is the rue des Rosiers, a mini-ghetto of quiet vibrancy, whose establishments include **Jo Goldenberg's,** the best Jewish delicatessen in Paris, **Le Maimonide,** the street's falafel-sandwich shop, and a marvelously respectable 1930s-style health club called **Hammam Saint-Paul,** which has no Nautilus ma-



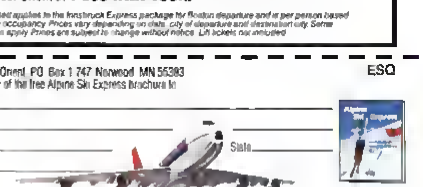
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chimes but an endless supply of steam.

The most welcome arrivals on the restaurant scene in recent years are the wine bars. Not only are reservations not at a premium, but you can order fine vintages by the glass and dine on light, graceful cuisine without being scrutinized by some-



one in a uniform. The success of **L'Écluse,** a belle époque nook on the quai des Grands Augustins has caused three branches to open in other parts of Paris. On the rue des Petits Champs behind the Palais Royal is the best of them all, **Willi's,** a casual wateringhole where the staff and food are bilingual (French and something else). Regulars tend to be adepts of Jean-Paul Gaultier, Kenzo, and the other "cool" designers who proliferate around the nearby Place des Victoires, a square whose elegant proportions outclass everything in the shops.

There is complaint these days about the heightened presence of cops in the streets ordered by the new, conservative prime minister, Jacques Chirac, but so far they don't seem to have affected the exuberant presence of wall artists. The favored graffiti medium is stencil, and its busy practitioners seem to be carrying on some sort of secret dialogue ("Adieu Simones" is one refrain), pausing from time to time to emblazon a wall with strange totemic figures inspired by the Aztecs. The best of the commercial public artists shows something called Gervais yogurt being devoured by a King Kong–size ape.

Ten years ago, the director of the Louvre told me that nobody went to French museums except schoolchildren on a leash. Today, thanks to the success of the Centre Pompidou, Paris is awash in new museums of art, fashion, and science. These are worthy but often dogged attractions (the French like to stop and *read* everything), and less avid museum goers are rediscovering the city's plentitude of tiny shrines devoted to the work of one man and often housed in what was his home. The best long-running theater in Paris is still to be found in the wildly melodramatic lithographs for *Hamlet* made in the 1830s and 1840s by Delacroix, on display in his former atelier on the Place de Fürstemberg. If you're wary of the crowds at the celebrated **Rodin Museum,** the next best thing is the **Bourdelle Museum,** on a back street off the Boulevard du Montparnasse, where turn-of-the-century sculptor Antoine Bourdelle's astonishing stone figures are packed into his beautiful former studio. For refreshment in the same period, I suggest a drink in the bar of the **Hôtel Lutetia** on the Boulevard Raspail, the Left Bank's only grand hotel, beautifully restored to its former splendor.

Finally, a visit to **Saint-Eustache.** Just where you expect to see a tableau of the Holy Family in this vast, gloomy Gothic church in the new and shiny Forum des Halles is another, entirely surprising tableau showing garishly colored, cartoonlike figures carrying loads of bread, fruit, and vegetables. It is a commemoration of February 28, 1969, when the tough old produce-sellers of Les Halles were kicked out of their stalls for good, and it is perhaps the most dramatic sign of Paris's awakened sense of its real, less glittering self.

—Charles Michener

ROME

Christmas traditions as we know them are slowly catching on in Rome, but it will be a long time before Italians have taken up caroling, "'Twas the night before Christmas," figgy pudding, and "snow" in an aerosol can. While there is a city Christmas tree set up in the Piazza Venezia, and smaller versions do line some of the city streets, such as the Via Giulia and the Via dei Condotti, Romans have not yet mastered the art of actually decorating a tree. Most look as if they have been doused in multicolored silver foil dropped from a great height. The enterprising fellow who set up a HAVE YOUR PICTURE TAKEN WITH SANTA CLAUS stand in the Piazza Navona last year did considerably less business than the equally enterprising woman got up as *La Befana,* the good witch of Italian folklore who brings all good children a mountain of gifts on the Feast of the Epiphany in early January.

La Befana read the situation correctly: Romans still want their familiar Christmas traditions, not foreign imports from colder climes. Rome still responds to the religious rhythms that ruled the city for a millennium or so, a pattern of religious holidays no civil government could ever abolish. Therefore the date for the kickoff of the Christmas season in Rome is December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. On that day, about midmorning, the pope sets out from the Vatican (the gorgeously decorated papal carriages having long since been replaced by a snappy, custom-made Mercedes limousine) to be present at the garlanding of the statue of the Madonna standing atop her column in the Piazza di Spagna. The honor of actually placing the necklace of hothouse flowers around the Virgin's neck goes to the Rome fire department because only they have a ladder long enough to reach.

Ever since Saint Francis thought up the Nativity scene in the early thirteenth century, it seems that no Italian family or church has been without one. In Rome the best known of the scenes, called *presepi,* are the ones that grace the Spanish Steps and the larger-than-life Nativity scene set up in St. Peter's Square. There the humble stable has about the same dimensions as a good-size ranch house. The rest of Rome bristles with Nativity scenes. In fact, churches compete with one another, even stooping to advertising, to draw larger crowds. Last year, Sta. Maria del Popolo had over a hundred, ranging from the traditional (Joseph, Mary, Baby, manger, ox, ass) to the frankly bizarre (the Holy Family in space, looking, unfortunately, like a Middle Eastern version of the Jetsons).

No matter what your religious orientation might be, a visit to **St. Peter's** for the pope's celebration of Christmas midnight mass is a spectacle that shouldn't be missed. It looks like a slice of the Renaissance come to life. Those princes of the church not actually officiating sit in a phalanx to the left of the altar, all of them dressed in their finest crimson silk robes. The Swiss Guards make a ceremonial appearance, and the choir of the Sistine Chapel sings. The present pope has abandoned the Sedia Gestatoria, the heavy throne carried by the burly *sediari* preferring instead to walk down the aisle to St. Peter's huge altar. As he makes the long walk, people applaud, weep, sing, snap his picture, and hold out their young children for his blessing. The pope is such a sucker for kids that he always stops to bless them and address a few words to beaming parents.

There are two ways of attending the mass. You can simply show up around 10:00 P.M. on Christmas Eve, get in line, and hope you'll be admitted (most people do manage to get in), or you can get a ticket in advance, which guarantees you a seat a little—and in some cases, a lot—closer to the main altar. (It's the luck of the draw, unfortunately.) In neither case will you be able to avoid the lengthy and, unfortunately, inescapable security precautions that



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the times demand. To obtain a ticket to the mass, write one to two months in advance (in English) to: The Prefettura della Casa Pontificia, Citta del Vaticano 00120.

Of course, St. Peter's is not the only one of Rome's nine hundred churches celebrating midnight mass. A completely different spirit prevails across town at the **Church of the Ara Coeli** on the Capitoline Hill. This church has been taken over for Christmas midnight mass by Rome's large gypsy population. On this one night of the year, they take off their begging rags and deck themselves out in gaudy finery. Most people arrive in flashy



rented cars, Rolls-Royces, Mercedeses, and Cadillacs, and the gypsies show up to pay their respects to the bambino Gesu, a miraculous statue of the Christ Child, one of the Ara Coeli's great treasures. The service itself is something akin to a party with a religious undertone—never disrespectful, but certainly not subdued. Although gypsies dominate this particular mass, anyone is welcome to attend—be advised, though, no matter what you wear, you'll be underdressed.

From the Feast of the Immaculate Conception until the Feast of the Epiphany, the focal point of the Roman Christmas is the glorious, baroque **Piazza Navona.** This, perhaps the most beautiful of Rome's squares, is completely encircled by stands that turn the piazza into a giant toy and candy market. The great treat for Roman children at this time of year is to be taken to the Piazza Navona to ogle toys, which range from the out of season and spirit (a pint-size Rambo crossbow) to the elaborately mechanical and the giant and stuffed. But the real attraction is candy. There are Nativity figures made of spun sugar and chocolate, and Christmas trees made of green sugar. A big seller, and an item that's been sold there for centuries at Yuletide, is *carbone*. These are lumps of what appear to be coal, but are, in fact, jet-black rock candy meant, presumably, for the child who gets off this year with a (very sweet) warning.

Of all the Roman hotels, the two houses belonging to the CIGA chain, the **Grand** and the **Excelsior,** make the most effort at Christmastime. The Grand places a twenty-five foot Christmas tree in its opulent lobby as well as a rare and beautiful *presepio* made of figures fashioned from Murano glass. The dining room, Le Rallaye, is the place to go on Christmas Day if you are hungering for a traditional "back home" Christmas dinner. A few blocks away on the Via Veneto, the Grand's sister hotel, the Excelsior, goes all out at Christmas. The entire facade of this turn-of-the-century palace is decorated—the decorations, specially designed for the hotel, were the talk of Rome last year. If you ask, the Excelsior will arrange for tickets to the papal midnight mass on Christmas Eve. And on the same night, the hotel's chefs prepare what is generally held to be the best traditional Christmas Eve dinner in the city—some five or six courses, including the works: risotto, grilled fish, and capitoni (eels). And Christmas Day continues in the traditional vein, with cappelletti, roasts, and *pezzelti*.

If you're looking for a winter luncheon spot, the **Birreria Peroni** on Via di San Marcello, 19C, near the Trevi Fountain, is perfect. Far from elegant, the Birreria is the closest thing Rome has to a saloon. Early this century, the Peroni brewing company (Peroni is the "Bud" of Italy) set out to convert Italians from a nation of wine drinkers. So the company set up restaurants like this one, dedicated to good food and a celebration of beer. Few tourists find their way here—not because they aren't welcome but because they don't know it's here (there is no sign on the street). The seven or eight waiters, dressed in uniform red sweaters to wintertime, rush around the two vaulted rooms, bellowing orders, joking with regulars, and thumping down large tankards of beer. Regulars abound—some men sit at their tables and before they've unfolded their copy of *24 Ore* (Italy's *Wall Street Journal*), their usual order is plunked on the table in front of them. A menu of daily specials is chalked up on the wall—pastas, fish, roasts, vegetables in season—as well as old standbys like the special roasted sausages, paper-thin breaded veal cutlets, *cruda* (an Italian version of sauerkraut), and the best apple strudel south of the Alps.

In many respects, **Il Drappo,** a Sardegnan restaurant near the Piazza Farnese, is everything Birreria Peroni is not: it is quiet, elegant, intimate—yet the two have some things in common: they offer good food at reasonable prices, and they have not yet become famous with out-of-towners. There is only one waiter, and it's best to follow his suggestions for first courses (there is no printed menu). As you sit down, you'll be presented with a dish of a Sardegnan specialty, *carta di musica*, paper thin slices of crispy fried bread covered with fresh diced tomatoes and a light sprinkling of aromatic oil. You'll also get a plate of thinly sliced zucchini marinated in balsamic vinegar and rosemary. The pasta course comes in two delicious stages: *spagheth con granchi*, spaghetti in a spicy tomato sauce mixed with chunks of sweet crabmeat, followed by *gnocchi alla sarda*, tiny balls of potato pasta in a thick sauce of ground lamb and tomatoes. A cut of *maialano* (roast pork) is done to perfection, and a tricky dish, roast calamari, doesn't have a hint of toughness, and the tang of the sea is still there. The *granita di fragole* is very good and not doused in white sugar as is so often the case, and there is an excellent light fruit tart or fresh fruit in season. With a few bottles of sparkling Sardegnan white wine and a chilled digestivo or two, a meal like this can be had for between $35 to $45 for two, including tip. Il Drappo has only a few tables, and you're advised to book in advance.

And if you are looking for some last-minute Christmas presents or stocking stuffers with a distinctively Roman accent, there are some shops, by and large unknown, you might want to seek out. **Mario Fefe** runs a *legatorio di libri*, a shop specializing in fine bookbindings on Via della Stelletta (no. 20b, near the Pantheon). Roman book collectors bring their first editions here for rebinding in a variety of leathers and papers, and they expect to wait a long time and pay a great deal of money for the service. However, Fefe has a small stock of ready-bound blankbooks, ideal for sketching or taking notes, at extremely reasonable prices.

Off Via di Ripetta, almost at Piazza del Popolo, on Via Fiume (no. 5) is one of Rome's most interesting toy shops, **L'Erbavoglio.** You don't have to be a kid to be taken with this tiny shop's collection of new and old mechanical toys (the new ones are quite cheap: $5 to $10, the antique ones are good buys at $25 and up), carved wooden toys, games, tricks, music boxes, trams, mobiles, and sailing boats. And if there's a more beautiful way of keeping track of the new year than with a diary from **FMR** (Via Borgognona 4D, near the Spanish Steps), we haven't discovered it yet. In a shop about the size and design of a jewel box, you'll find desk-top diaries with silk or leather bindings, all charmingly illustrated for prices ranging from 25,000 to 90,000 lire ($16 to $60). There are also very pretty address books with illuminated capital letters on handmade paper, from 25,000 to 70,000 lire.

—Robert Time



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Walking Tall in Carmel



Carmel is picture perfect: storybook cottages, cypress trees, and a glorious wide-angle view of the Pacific. All Hollywood added was the mayor

BY CHARLIE HAAS

Well, yeah, of course there's a new mood here, just like you'd expect there would be. Folks eating the Cal-nouvelle down at the Rio Grill—there's that little *atavism* now, the way they go tearing into those deftly arranged baby vegetables. Folks shopping for sculpture and luggage and status casual wear on the main street in town, they don't have that *fear* they used to have creeping around their eyes, that icy *fear* of going home next week and seeing the same thing for 65 percent less in one of the off-brander catalogs. And maybe it's your imagination, about those spooky little Ennio Morricone riffs coming out of those half-million sets of wind chimes next to the paper koi on those beachside cottage porches, but who can say? Weirder things have happened here. And recently, too.

It's because of the Stranger, of course—the one who used to be the Gun With No Name and is now the Gun With No Further Political Ambitions, Honest. He's got this place walking tall again. For a while there, the Stranger had people all talking against each other, even *running* against each other, even running against *him*. But now all that seems like a distant flashback, now that the espresso-and-croissant places are selling CLINT *IS* MAYOR buttons and the deli has proclaimed its smoked-tongue sandwich the Mayor's Favorite (with a butcher-paper-*vérité* rendering of the mayor in the window, cleverly ad-libbing, "I'll have the smoked tongue, please!"), now that folks are crowding into the Stranger's own restaurant to get their Sudden Impact Polish Sausage Sandwiches and their For a Few Dollars More Steak Platters, now that even one of his erstwhile opponents has a store window full of celebratory T-shirts whose hand-drawn likenesses of the Stranger are as crude as an extended whipping sequence but as well-meant as a foreign film festival award. And as for the way the Stranger looks at people—well, that's how it is, being in a place where the sunlight hits the ocean so pretty and you just can't resist looking at it. After a while it . . . well, ma'am, it just kind of makes you—well, *squint*, is what it makes you do. I mean, you wouldn't want to go telling the French critics that, because the nonsignificance of it would just about break their hearts, but there you are.

And it could happen to anyone, not just the Stranger, because the Monterey Bay area is one of those places that just hits people right over the head with California. The clean air and mild weather, the placement of hilly redwood forests so near the clear Pacific, with the passage from one to the other mediated sometimes by silky beaches and other times by monumental granite cliffs, the mosses and wild flowers, hawks and sea otters, and a million other life-forms brought into one place by the rare throwing together of so many distinct biological zones, and above all the special light, so bright but without harshness so that everything is outlined and inviting—all these have made this a place where you can eavesdrop anytime on pale people saying to each other, "Look, it's *not* crazy, we'll sell the house, I'll get a job out here, look at all these people, *they* got jobs out here, *I* can get a job out here. Maybe I won't even *want* a job, I mean, when you think about it, what's a job . . . ?"

If you're a stranger here yourself, and want a crash introduction to all this, you might start with a visit to Point Lobos, the state nature reserve a few miles south of Carmel on Highway 1. Here you can walk on easy trails just above the ocean and look down at beds of kelp, fishing cormorants, and clear green water topped by a lace of foam that hypnotically reshapes itself every second at the huge toes of fissured cliffs. Halfway up the cliffs, flat ledges are carpeted with thick, all-color coats of native wild flowers; all the way up, there are stands of wind-shaped Monterey cypress. At the ocean's edge, tiny crabs skitter in tight, shady folds of rock over standing water. Hiking to one of the coves—a wide, flat arena of rock and water—you can stand under pines and look down at sunning sea lions only yards away. There are good beaches at Point Lobos for tide-pooling—reaching into a sand-walled evolutionary soup bowl full of unlikely intertidal beings and letting a sea anemone clutch your intruding finger—or, with snorkeling gear, you can go right into the water and meet the Speckled Sea Lemon and Orange Bram Sponge face-to-weird-crawly-thing.

In the greater Carmel-Monterey resort-plex, in fact, there are few kinds of fun you can't have. You can rent a bicycle and go spinning along Monterey's oceanside bike path or Carmel Valley Road, which runs through graceful ranch country east of Carmel. There are horses for rent, as well as scuba and snorkeling stuff, and fishing charters and whale-watching cruises and professional auto racing. There's the Great Monterey Squid Festival in May, the Carmel Bach Festival in July, and, in September, the Monterey Jazz Festival, to which the mayor of Carmel bravely and wisely devoted so many non-plot-advancing minutes when he directed *Play Misty for Me*, the never-to-be-sufficiently-studied 1971 thriller-cum-Carmel-area-travelogue.

Or say you are a big bug for golf

PHOTO CREDITS ON PAGE T79

CHARLIE HAAS *is a journalist and screenwriter whose credits include* Tex *and* Over the Edge.



The waves off Big Sur, just south of Carmel, seen through the lens of Ansel Adams



The controversy isn't whether Carmel will be a tourist town but what kind it will be.

among the eight local courses open to the public are Del Monte, Laguna Seca and Pebble Beach (the AT&T National Pro-Am, formerly the Crosby, is in February). You can run down to Big Sur's Esalen Institute for "Aggression, Sexuality, and Danger: A Gazebo Workshop for Parents and Children" or "Quality Life: Senior Executives" ("The workshop is open to a small number of participants who are not limited by resources").

Not interested in increasing your Aliveness by being a Live One? You can run up to Salinas and eat some of the best-known Mexican food, at the unconscionably inexpensive Rosita's Armory Cafe. You can spend some time in Pacific Grove, modestly famous for the thousands of Monarch butterflies that flock there every October, and get the feel of a less-stagy California beach town: inexpensive motels, old five-and-dimes, lazy life.

There are also several flat-out tourist destinations, such as the $50-million Monterey Bay Aquarium, America's newest and biggest, on Cannery Row. This place is not only fun (sea otters eating on their backs; bat rays zipping around in an open pool), but is also the culturally improving sort of attraction that provides you with fun facts to drop into your conversation back home. ("You know, the coonstripe shrimp changes its sex. Yeah, it does. The young male turns into a fertile female after the first year or so. Stays that way, too.") As at any aquarium, there are a lot of conversations among the patrons that Charles Laughton, Peter Lorre, and Broderick Crawford wouldn't care to hear, but with about five hundred species in place, there are quite a few unfamiliar types that refuse to resemble *anything*. (Overheard from a group passing a display, with aged parent in tow: "Oh, I don't think Mother should—*don't look, Mother*.") Highly recommended.

Mission San Carlos Borromeo, the rebuilt eighteenth- and nineteenth-century headquarters of California Catholicism, is another such attraction: you can see the sarcophagus and reconstructed bedroom of Father Junipero Serra, "the founder of California," a prolific converter of Native Americans who has been declared venerable and is thus only two steps away from becoming California's first saint (the mission is hoping for a papal visit in 1987). (By the way, your correspondent and his Significant Wife picked up the best trinket of their trip in the mission's gift shop: a booklet of *Old Spanish Sayings*, also good for springing on folks back home: "Well, you know, 'Having steps to go down, you look for a rope to let yourself down.' And, of course, 'The same knife that cuts my bread cuts my finger....'" Gee, quite a few of these old Spanish savings don't seem to make a lot of sense. Then again, their compiler was a professor at the Defense Language Institute, the old Army Presidio in Monterey, where foreign tongues are taught to government personnel for intelligence purposes, so maybe "The grief of someone else, hangs from a hair" means "The microfilm is under the third flagstone. Be careful of our friend with the limp." Hard to say. Highly recommended anyway.)

With all this and more available, people couldn't be kept away from Carmel with a stick, a fact that is not an unmixed blessing to either residents or visitors. People who think often about the difficulties of tourism, and about movies—Californians, say—may have been reminded by Carmel's recent electoral fun of *High Plains Drifter* (1973, dir. Clint Eastwood, every angle an art masterpiece). In that one, the craven folk of a western town put Eastwood's character in charge of the place. In short order, he changes the name of the town to Hell, has all the buildings painted bright red, and organizes a grand welcoming picnic for some outlaws who are coming to tear the place up. In a campaign dominated by questions about commercialization and tourism, *High Plains Drifter* could have been a key issue if the opposition had been on its toes.

Of course, some people in other parts of California think that a kind of Hellification has already been visited on Carmel—a classic instance of a place selling off its "charm" and being loved to death; others think it the perfect place to weekend or retire. Either way, "Carmel" is one of the most freighted and bandied-about place-names in the state, as in, "In this fifty-acre condominium-and-research-park development, we're going for a definite *Carmel feel*," or, contrastingly, "Jesus H. Christ, dear, something called Unique Dimensions has just opened on Fifth Street. I think it's either a croissant place or a parachute-cloth clothing boutique; anyway, this town is getting *Carmelized*. Let's move before our rent triples."

Though many of the media played the mayoral election as a contest over whether Carmel wanted to be "a tourist town," the matter is about as open to debate as whether Disneyland was a nicer place before the summer people caught on to it. David Walton, who owned a legendary Monterey coffeehouse in the Fifties and Sixties and now has a fine Thai restaurant,

"When you live in a beautiful place," says one resident, "you have to expect people to come."



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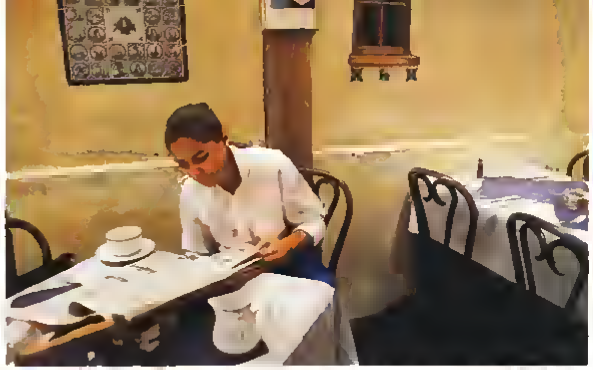
the Beau Thai, incongruously located on Monterey's poor, tricked-up Cannery Row, says, "There was a time, of course, when Carmel was actually the southern axis of northern California bohemianism, with a lot of good art. Today, the downtown is full of huge "galleries" selling awful brass waiting-room sculpture and cornball oils of the Golden Gate Bridge. ("Why did I move to Carmel and become an artist? Well, I guess I was always one of those people who fit in too well. I mean, the square world understands the hell out of me. You could say I march to a same drummer.")

"This place has been sold down the river," says a resident—a nonmerchant—who has lived in the area for fourteen years and in Carmel for eight. "It's gone. When I first came here, there were still artists—guys living in cottages near the beach for seventy-five dollars a month. They weren't Robinson Jeffers, necessarily, but they were serious. The bars were local, there were hippies, there was dope—it was still a local place, a real place, to a certain extent."

But even with the town "gone," this resident unhesitatingly answers that he still considers living there to be worth it—especially if you live, as he does, on one of the shady, storybook-looking streets away from downtown. "Carmel is a stop on the tour now, and if you live here, you can't believe how it just never *ends*—there used to be a little recovery period in the winter, but not anymore. Still, the tour bus takes them to the main street, and six blocks away from there nothing has changed."

The issues that Eastwood faced in his campaign were the very essence of Carmel controversy: whether ice-cream cones should be legal for sale, whether there should be public toilets for tourists, and similar fine distinctions aimed not at determining whether Carmel will be a tourist town but at what *kind* of tourist town it will be. The dominant answer, revealed by a walk around downtown, seems to be, "a genteel, expensive one," the kind of place where the grocery store doesn't have cheese, it has cheeses. But there is no guarantee that high-ticket tourist stuff won't be schlock, only that it will be high-ticket. By the end of the day, you can see the shoppers stumbling around, bushed, thinking, "Wait, Sante Fe has those roofs, Aspen you can see the ski lifts, this one is like a little English village, right, Carmel."

It's tricky going here. we had a good Italian meal at Casanova, but Collage, the same owners' confused attempt at a high-tech Euro-bistro, was the kind of mishap you dread when traveling, right down to the avant-stale bread. (A sandwich from the Mediterranean Market, a good Italian deli, may well be the best lunch in town, especially since you can take it out of town to eat it.) At the Highlands Inn, one of the most popular honeymoon spots in California, we had a comfortable room, a great ocean view, and all the firewood and Jacuzzi jets we could eat, but the operation was so well-oiled that you could sense those happy consummations being cranked out by the clock.



In the rising tide of village eateries are a few establishments that nobly defy Carmelization.

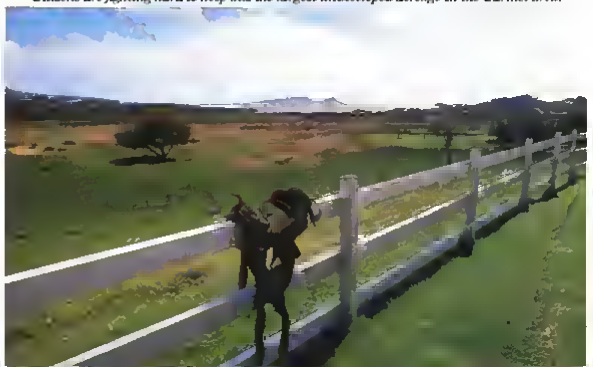
This aspect is even more pronounced in the 17-Mile Drive, an excursion on a private road ($5 admission) past fancy houses, golf courses, and numbered tidbits of nature, where you are supposed to stop your car, get out, get transcendent, and press on to the next number. The ground squirrels and sea lions look noticeably less happy with the mobs of drivers here than with the relatively few walkers at Point Lobos. The high point of the Drive is the famous Lone Cypress, star of matchbooks and coasters throughout the area. Here you have the odd spectacle of hundreds of people pulling up in their cars and dutifully trooping down a walkway to stand under a tree that's famous for looking nice from a distance, and heading back to their cars, their faces aglaze with Rapture of the So-so. A couple of days in metro Carmel, topped off by this, can give you that sadly familiar feeling of needing a vacation from your vacation. It is time to go south.

Below Carmel, Highway 1 becomes sinuous, climbing and dipping between the Pacific and fields full of cows and horses as it heads for the downtown-less community of Big Sur. The Santa Lucia Mountains are so rough here that nobody seriously tried to settle the area until the 1880s, though nearby Monterey had become the capital of Alta California in 1770.

There are a few restaurants, cabin lodges, and inns along the highway, and several campgrounds. But mainly there is the northern section of the Los Padres National Forest, whose hundreds of thousands of acres encompass the Ventana Wilderness, most of the Big Sur River and many of its tributary streams, and some of the most beautiful and various country conceivable for backpacking and day-hiking.

If strapped for time, you can go to Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, which shares a turn-off from Highway 1 with the cabins of the Big Sur Lodge, and take the short walk to Pfeiffer Falls and Valley View. In less time than it takes to be batch-processed through the 17-Mile Drive, you can be standing on high ground, probably alone, and looking across a beautiful green valley and down to

Citizens are fighting hard to keep this the largest undeveloped acreage in the Carmel area.





Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf seems unimpressed by the commotion going on around it.

a perfect U of mountainsides that frames the clouds and ocean behind Point Sur.

But if you have a few hours or a few days, you can walk in Los Padres. There are trailheads at the U.S. Forest Ranger Station on Highway 1 where you can get maps and ask about trail conditions. There are also trailheads at the ends of winding roads that cut inland from the highway. Driving in on one of these, we first passed a small assortment of Big Sur residences—from falling down cabins to little glass-and-redwood palaces—but, farther in, saw only gangs of mailboxes at the feet of dirt driveways, representing dozens of houses tucked out of sight. (Turning on the radio, I scanned through static all the way down the FM band, finally finding one station that was playing the latest in Nigerian pop. Isolated, but hep.)

At the end of the road, we parked, found photocopied trail maps in a self-service ranger stationette, and took off walking, and things took a turn for the wonderful. The trail was lined with madrona and manzanita, wild strawberries, iris, and lupine. It passed waterfalls, climbed to meadows, and admitted few sounds but the stream below the trail or the wind in the canyon next to us. There were great arches made by fallen trees and branches alongside the trail, and the occasional screeches of jays somewhere around the bend. Even when rain threatened, we kept walking, hooked on seeing what was next.

We stayed that night at the cushy-rustic Ventana Inn, which has cozy pine-paneled rooms, balconies looking over the ocean or into the forest, a Japanese bathhouse, and its own trailhead. It would be an ideal place for a luxurious reentry after a few nights of backpacking, or an uncommonly posh base camp for day hikes. The important thing is to get into the forest, where you can bathe in streams or natural hot springs, and see the stars incredibly clear and numerous in the non-light-polluted night sky; where, after only a few hours, the plain miracle of tramping causes expensively researched, natural joy-button chemicals to be released in your brain, and where, from four thousand feet, you can have a vista of Big Sur and the coast that will be an indelible memory. It will do a lot for you; it will make you into a smiling, right-brained woodsy creature, and you'll go home seeing things differently, and be better off than you are. The real trick of a vacation, and this place makes it easy, is for you, your own sweetened self, to be the souvenir.

PRACTICALITIES

GETTING THERE: *Flying:* Monterey Peninsula Airport is served by United, PSA, and other airlines. *Driving:* Highway 1, the principal route through the area, extends up and down the coast but is sometimes closed in places by slides—check with the California Highway Patrol (624-8032) before setting out. If this is the case, or if a faster route is desired, you can take 101 (then 156 north or 183 south) to Castroville, the Salinas Valley's artichoke mecca, and pick up 1 south.

LODGING: Highlands Inn (624-3801), $175–$1101. Ventana Inn (667-2331), $125–$525. Campsites in the Los Padres National Forest, $3–$6 a night. There are well over one hundred places to stay in the Monterey Bay area, from modest hotels to resorts such as The Lodge at Pebble Beach (624-3811, $175–$600) to rustic ranch inns in Carmel Valley. The Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce (P.O. Box 1770, 380 Alvarado, Monterey, California 93940) puts out a *Hotel & Motel Guide*. Anthony Hitchcock and Jean Lindgren's *Country Inns, Lodges and Historic Hotels of California* (Burt Franklin & Company, New York) gives a good sampling of the many bed-and-breakfasts in Carmel, Monterey, and Pacific Grove.

CAMPING INFORMATION: A good map of the Los Padres Forest is available at the Big Sur Ranger Station for $1. The Ventana chapter of the Sierra Club publishes an excellent book, *Trail Guide to Los Padres National Forest*, with a large map tucked into it—$8.95 at bookstores, including the Club's own store on Ocean Avenue in Carmel.

BICYCLES: One-day rentals of ten-speeds are $9 at Freewheeling Cycles in Monterey (373-3855) and $12 at WM&M in Pacific Grove (372-2552).

HORSES: The stables at Toro Regional Park on Highway 68 (484-9932) offer a guided four hour horseback ride in the five-thousand-acre park ($50), as well as overnight rides with barbecue.

FISHING: Several firms at Monterey's Fisherman's Wharf will take you out on a boat in search of rockfish, snapper, and (in season) salmon. One such company, Chris's (375-5951), charges $19 a day on weekdays and $22 on weekends, will rent out gear, and also conducts whale-watching cruises during the propitious late December–early February period.

GOLF: Some sample green fees: $25 at Del Monte (373-2436), $55 at Spyglass Hill (624-6611), $125 at Pebble Beach (624-6611). Los Laureles Lodge in Carmel Valley (659-2233) offers a five day vacation including lodging, breakfasts, and play at five other public courses for $304—summer bookings one year in advance suggested.

DIVING: The Aquarius Dive Shop in Monterey (375-1933) rents out scuba gear for about $45 a day, and takes certified divers on guided tours for about the same price. For the duffer, snorkeling gear rents for $13.50 a day—which, together with a wet suit at $7, is sufficient for checking out the intertidal life-forms at Point Lobos.

OTHER BOOKS: *Monterey County* (history), by Augusta Fink (Western Tanager Press); *Walk This Way Please* (an on-foot nature and history guide), by Irene Gausch (Hummingbird Press, Carmel); *Carmel at Work and Play* (nostalgic reprint of the 1925 book), by Daisy F. Bostick and Dorothea Castelhun (Angel Press, Monterey).

NOTE: All telephone numbers given are in area code 408.

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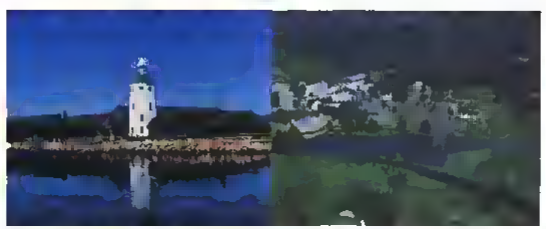
TRAVEL RELATED SERVICES



Every skier deserves the indulgence of a holiday stay at **Boyne Mountain Lodge.** You'll find the tastefully decorated rooms and new Boynehof mini-suites as inviting as the 16 groomed slopes themselves. And the cuisine in the newly renovated hotel dining room as spectacular. Of course, a stay at Boyne Mountain Lodge also offers a flurry of activities when you're off the slopes too. Boyne Falls, Michigan, (616) 549-2441.



Indulge in a legendary resort with year-round recreation facilities at the **Gideon Putnam Hotel.** When was the last time you had a mineral bath? Or played a set of tennis? Or went cross-country skiing? Give yourself a chance to get back to it, or just bask in the quiet seclusion abounding at the Gideon Putnam Hotel in Saratoga Springs, New York, (518) 584-3000.



Indulge in the serene seaside ambiance. Indulgence is only a couple of hours of the **Montauk Yacht Club & Inn.** way at the **Nevele**—a year-round re- Feast your eyes on yachts and sailboats. Sit down by the pool in summer or Feast on fresh seafood in our dining- ki down the powdery slopes in winter room. Float in the indoor pool. Soak And whatever the season, you'll find the sauna or whirlpool. Linger in the xciting entertainment in the Safari light of the working lighthouse that ounge and Stardust Room. Not to adds its charm to the Montauk Yacht ention exquisite dining. The Nevele, Club & Inn, Montauk, New York, llenville, New York, (914) 647-6000 (516) 668-3100.



Take a crash course in indulgence at **Skytop Lodge**—an elegant year-round resort secluded in the majestic Pocono Mountains. Surrounded by 5500 acres of private woodlands, Skytop offers a beautiful golf course, tennis, indoor pool, skiing, ice-skating, even fishing in a stream stocked with trophy trout. Plus sumptuous dining, and exciting entertainment. Skytop Lodge, Skytop, Pennsylvania, (717) 595-7401.

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THE ACTIVE TRAVELER

by Wendy Lowe and Neal Karlen

15 World-Class Winter Escapes

SKIING THE JAPANESE ALPS

An ancient Japanese proverb suggests that tasting something new grants the taster an extra seventy-five days of life. If new experiences count as much as new foods, then the life expectancy of those who partake of the Japan Ski Safari should extend at least an extra nine months. This safari, organized by Off the Deep End Travels, leads visitors on inn-to-inn Nordic excursions through two of Japan's best ski territories.

OTDE is running two Nordic trips this winter. Both offer accommodations in *minshukus*, the Japanese rendering of the country bed and breakfast. After a hard day of skiing, guests exchange their boots for house slippers, their privacy for rice-paper doors and a communal hot tub. Informal tutorials are also held on Japanese culture. Lessons include such practical advice as not to let your chopsticks stick up out of your dish at the end of a meal: it's a sign of death.

After a night on the *futon*, it's back to the slopes. One trip takes you to Zao Quasi National Park, which surrounds a volcanic region in northeastern Honshu. The park is best known for the Snow Monsters of Zao, the eerie white shapes formed on stunted pine trees by steam and frozen snow. The other Nordic trip runs through the Japanese Alps. These mountains, located in Chubu-Sangaku National Park, are identical to the European Alps—except for the rice-paper houses and stands of bamboo you see on the slopes. OTDE can also arrange downhill tours or side trips to the Sapporo Snow Festival in February. The tentative departure date for an eleven-day tour of Zao Onsen is February 7. The Japanese Alps trip leaves around February 21, the downhill tour starts around January 24. (Dates are tentative.) All of the tours begin at Tokyo's Narita Airport and range in price from $1,000 to $1,200. CONTACT OFF THE DEEP END TRAVELS, P.O. BOX 7511, JACKSON, WYOMING 83001, TEL.: 800-223-6833 OR, IN WYOMING, 307-733-8707.

DOWN THE RIVER OF RUINS

In the 1830s, John Lloyd Stephens, an American, wandered deep into the jungles of Mexico. There he stumbled upon pyramids, pillars, stairways, and terraces from the then-lost civilization of the Mayans. Stephens approached the native owner and bought the entire area for $50. Since then the Mayans have become very—and almost totally—found. Last summer no less than four traveling exhibits of the ancient civilization made the rounds of the U.S. This winter Far Flung Adventures is organizing trips to the real thing.

The eleven-day journey features a float down the Rio Usamacinta, the "River of Ruins" that was once the heart of the Mayan empire. Today the river links some of the most important archaeological sites in Mesoamerica. Among the places visitors will see is Palenque, a painstakingly restored Mayan complex deep in the Sierra forests; Piedras Negras, where guests reach unrestored ruins by hacking their way through tropical undergrowth; and Yaxchilan, home of some terrific bas-relief stonework and hieroglyphics.

Trips are planned for February 20 and March 5. The cost is $1,300, excluding airfare. The food is unusually good, with plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, enchiladas made from scratch, guacamole, cheeses, and fresh meats, plus made-to-order omelets most mornings. Meals and lodging the first, second, and last nights are paid for. CONTACT FAR FLUNG ADVENTURES, BOX 31, TERLINGUA, TEXAS 79852, TEL.: 915-371-2489.

RIDERS OF THE PAMPAS

There is apparently no such thing as a dude ranch in South America. So if you want to play gaucho on the pampas, they make you play it real. One slightly accommodating program is the FITS Equestrian fourteen-day horseback trek across the treeless, grassy pampas of Argentina and Uruguay. Five nights are spent in hotels—but that's it for the life of the dude. The point is to ride, and ride hard.

Upon arrival guests are assigned a sturdy criollo horse and gaucho saddle. For practice you get a four-hour jaunt through some nearby steep mountains. The first night is spent at a primitive cold-water ranch; the next day's destination is a campsite at Quebrada de Puramarca, a large canyon whose sheer rock walls plunge thirteen thousand feet. Time out is taken along the way for sight-seeing and shopping in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, but the trip's true highlights are a thirty-mile beach gallop and a six-hour trek through the inland pampas. Nights are spent in hotels, country ranches, and out on the range. A trip departs November 16 and returns November 29, at a cost of $1,400, not including airfare. CONTACT FITS EQUESTRIAN, 2011 ALAMO PINTADO ROAD, SOLVANG, CALIFORNIA 93463, TEL.: 805-688-9494.





PHOTO CREDITS ON PAGE T30

Above: The Usamacinta River winds through rain forests all but inaccessible by road. But ride the river, and it will take you to ruins of what was once the heart of the Mayan empire.
Right: In the far northern part of Japan are mountains that resemble the Alps, and in Sapporo, a snow festival, where competitors from all over the world construct intricate sculptures as big as floats in the Macy's parade.

Left: On an equestrian tour of Argentina and Uruguay you'll see the pampas as the natives have been seeing them for years—from the saddle. Below: Touring New Zealand by bicycle gives you time to enjoy fully the island's rolling hills and gemlike lakes as you work up an appetite for some of the finest cuisine in the country.





1,000 MILES ON TWO WHEELS

Sailing near the coast of New Zealand, Captain Cook encountered a tribe of Maori warriors. *"Haere ki uta he patu ake!"* yelled the tribesmen from their canoes. Actually their invitation to the captain was to "come ashore and be clubbed!" Natives are much nicer to visitors these days, especially if the guests are country cyclists willing to get to know them and their land. On twenty-one-day New Zealand cycle trips organized by Gerhard's Bicycle Odysseys, guests are given the opportunity, and the time, to sample the wide variety of New Zealand's scenery and people.

The trip is more strenuous than most, with forty-nine miles of often hard pedaling scheduled each day. But the sites are worth the puffing—among the stops are Mount Cook, the alpinelike village of Queenstown, and a number of glaciers, deserted beaches, forests, and waterfalls. Visitors are housed in local hotels and country inns, with meals provided at the best local restaurants.

The trips run from February 7 to March 1 and March 7 to March 29, and are limited to twenty-two people. Cost, not including airfare, is about $1,700. CONTACT GERHARD'S BICYCLE ODYSSEYS, 4949 SOUTHWEST MACADAM, PORTLAND, OREGON 97201; TEL.: 503-223-2402.

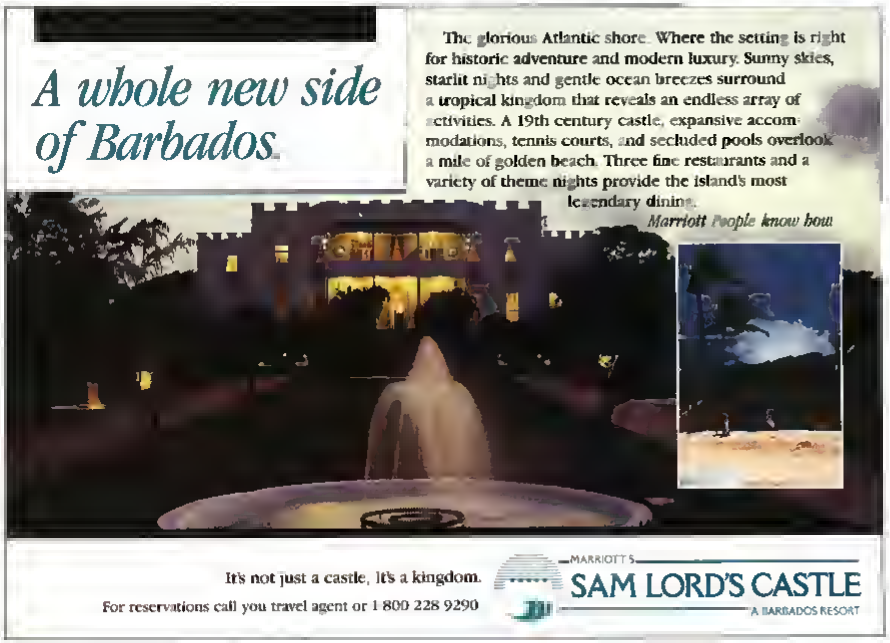


Miles of untracked powder blanket the Ruby Mountains, where the only possible lift is a helicopter.

NEVADA AIRLIFT

Trust Nevada to give its most astounding natural resource a name that sounds like a Vegas burlesque queen. Still, the state's Ruby Mountains manage to attract the most rabid fans this side of Wayne Newton's. What the range has to offer the devoted is some of the deepest, least-trammeled powder snow in the world. Throw in some of the planet's steepest ski bowls, and you have the only Nevadan attraction that needn't sell itself by monstrous neon billboards. The mountains are virtually inaccessible, the accommodations almost nonexistent, and the skiing quite expensive. Yet those in the know find the Ruby Mountains, pay what they have to, and usually come back for more.

The best location for hitting the Rubies is near Elko. The powder there is light, dry, and can be found in thirty-five-foot dumps on the 10,387-foot-long Ruby Dome. The best place to stay is the Breitenstein House, a tiny bed and breakfast located on a cattle ranch twenty minutes from the casinos of Elko. After a 7:00 A.M. breakfast, guests are driven to a helipad and flown to isolated ski bowls that reach up to eleven thousand feet in elevation, with vertical drops of up to two thousand. Ski groups are composed of four visitors and a guide, when all complete a run, the helicopter swoops down and carries them to another bowl. Eight to ten bowls can be run before dark, and beepers are worn for safety amid the drifts. The season begins February 1 and lasts well into spring. The cost is $920 for a three-day weekday trip, $970 on the weekends; six-day stints are available for $1,700. CONTACT RUBY MOUNTAIN HELI-SKI, BREITENSTEIN HOUSE, LAMOILLE, NEVADA 89828, TEL.: 702-753-6356.



See Reader Service Card after page 32 of The Traveler.

CAYMAN BRAC AND BACK

The first to discover the holiday possibilities of the Cayman Islands were vacationing pirates. Since then the Islands have found an equally rabid clientele in scuba enthusiasts who come for some of the world's best diving. And one of the best ways to get to the action is on board the Little Cayman Diver, a sixty-five-foot cruising vessel specifically designed to carry scuba divers to the diving grounds off Little Cayman. There divers will find 150-foot visibility, seven-foot-tall sponges, gardens of swaying sea fans, and clouds of brilliant tropical fish. The ship holds eight large, fully air-conditioned cabins with oversize bunks and private washbasins, plus four showers. The week-long itinerary begins in Cayman Brac. From there it's seven miles to Little Cayman, where divers spend five days either underwater or at onshore barbecues and explorations. The cost is $895 per person, including meals, tanks, backpacks, and weights. Add about $200 for airfare from Miami to Cayman Brac. CONTACT LA MER DIVING SEAFARI, 823 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA, SUITE 810, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017, TEL.: 800-348-3669 OR, IN NEW YORK, 212-599-0886.

SAILING THE HAWAII TRIANGLE

There can be much more to a Hawaiian vacation than slouching on the beach or *fressing* at the buffet. One alternative can be found among the islands of Lanai, Molokai, and Maui. Here, protected from rough seas by the triplet of islands, are some of the best sailing grounds in the world. Out in the water are perfectly persistent trade winds, humpback whales, and dolphins that play in the wakes of sailboats. On the coastline are mountains of black lava coated with lush green jungle. One of the best ways to see the area, watch the whales, learn how to sail, or simply go along for a nice ride is on a personalized six-day sailing trip booked by American Wilderness Experience. Trips are led by Captain Bob Moon, a twenty-five-year veteran of the Hawaiian archipelago, who skippers from one of his thirty-five-foot sloops. To ensure guests privacy and elbowroom, only five visitors are usually allowed on his six-bunk vessels.

The trip starts in Lanai, which can be reached from Honolulu via the commuter Air Molokai. From there it's on to Maui, where the boat moors near the famous Kaanapali Beach resort. Guests can spend the night playing at the hotels, the next day it's back on board for a sail to the secluded anchorage of Honolua Bay. Fishing lines that trail the boat bring in fresh ono, ahi, aku, and mahi-mahi, which are cooked up for lavish dinners by the captain. More fortunate fish can be spied, with the help of snorkel gear, along shallow coral reefs that dot the route.

Winter trips leave about twice a month from November through April. Special whale-watching trips are scheduled between January and April, when humpback babies are most visible. The expedition costs $750 per person for six days and five nights of sailing. The fee includes all food and beverages served on board. A maximum of six people can charter the whole vessel for $3,750. CONTACT AMERICAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE, P.O. BOX 1486, BOULDER, COLORADO 80306, TEL.: 800-621-8385, EXT. 648, OR, IN COLORADO, 303-444-2632.

QUEBEC AROUND THE CLOCK

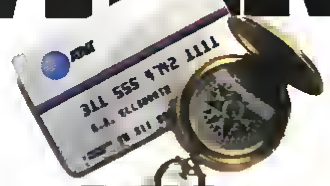
Travelers (1) intent on vacation partying or (2) desirous of a placid winter retreat will find solace in the *nuit blanche* of Quebec City, Canada. *Nuit blanche*, which is used to mean "all-nighter," is a phrase that expresses both the quiet beauty and raucous action of a happily confused town. For winter views, one barely needs to swivel one's head. For heavy partying, there are the bars and restaurants of Old Towne. And for activities in between, there is the giant toboggan run in front of the Chateau Frontenac. Or skating, snowshoeing, or sleighing over the St. Charles. Best of all, there are four major ski resorts located within a half-hour drive of the city.

The largest nearby resort—also the biggest in eastern Canada—is the Mont Ste. Anne ski area. Two expert trails, La S and La Super S, share a mountain with a novice run that goes for three miles. The resort also has sixteen lifts and 109 miles of cross-country trails. Some of those trails head right into the Laurentian wilderness, and are linked by ten heated shelters. At the very last shelter—a bar. Twenty minutes north of the city is the quieter Stoneham resort. Nearby are dozens more downhill trails and 120 additional miles of cross-country track. The ski season lasts from mid-November to May; one of the best (and most crowded) times is during Le Carnaval, held February 5–15. FOR MORE INFORMATION AND A LIST OF ACCOMMODATIONS, CONTACT THE NEAREST CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TOURIST OFFICE. IN THE EASTERN HALF OF THE U.S., YOU CAN CALL 800-443-7000. INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE HAD FROM TOURISME QUEBEC, C.P. 20,000, QUEBEC, CANADA G1K 7X2, TEL.: 514-873-2015.



Quebec City has learned to thrive on winter, with just the right mix of sports and raucous night life.

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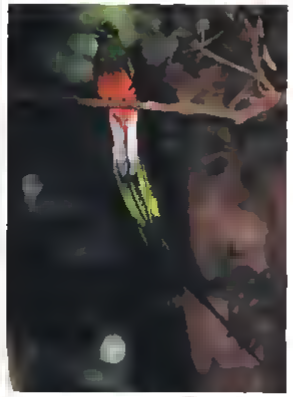
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In the heart of Costa Rica is forest primeval.

WHERE JAGUARS AND OCELOTS PLAY

Costa Rica is a collection of Nature's Greatest Hits, complete in one small volume. This tiny bridge of land between Panama and Nicaragua probably packs, per square mile, more diversity of terrain and plant and animal life than anywhere else in North or South America. Costa Rica also has thirteen national parks, five bio reserves, and more species of mammals and birds than Canada and the U.S. combined. There are deserted beaches, steam-hissing volcanoes, and as many as a thousand kinds of orchids. Amazingly, visitors can see just about everything the country has on the Tropical Odyssey, an eleven-day tour organized by a group called Journeys.

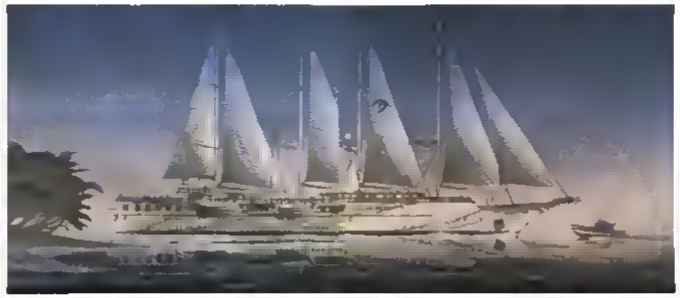
Though the tour travels deep into remotest Costa Rica, the hiking is easy, there's little or no camping, and the trip makes extensive use of vehicles. One of the main stops is the vast tropical rain forest of the Corcovado National Park. There giant waterfalls tumble from the jungle onto white-sand beaches, flocks of parrots screech overhead, and endangered ocelot, jaguar, and tapir survive.

The next destination is the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve, a privately owned refuge where threatened birdlife is nurtured. Optional extensions to the trip include rafting down powerful white-water rivers or traveling by nineteenth-century narrow-gauge train over skinny mountain passes and through green valleys filled with banana and cocoa plantations. The trip will run frequently between December and April, prices are not yet available. CONTACT JOURNEYS, 1220 CLAIR CIRCLE, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN 48103; TEL. 800-ALL-TREK OR, IN MICHIGAN, CALL 313-665-4407.

SAILING ON A STAR

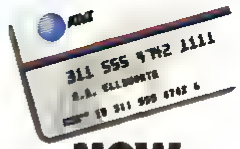
Stumped for a painless, leisurely way to get your name into history? Perhaps the answer is to book passage aboard the maiden voyage of the *Wind Star*. On December 13, the ship will make its debut as the world's longest sailing vessel with a trip from Martinique through the Windward Islands and into the Grenadines. These prime Windward sailing grounds have always been limited to small private yachts. But designers of the four-masted, 440-foot *Wind Star* have managed to build a vessel both small enough to land in these mite-size ports and big enough to carry 150 passengers in cruise-ship luxury.

Each of the ship's seventy-five cabins offers a VCR, color TV, radio, direct ship-to-shore telephone, and a bar. Oh, yes, and a magnificent ocean view. Outside the cabins are a staff of eighty-one, a swimming pool, a fully equipped gymnasium, and dinners of fresh seafood and tropical fruit. Guests may also water-ski, snorkel, para-sail, windsurf, or take out a Sunfinger raft to explore an uninhabited island. The *Wind Star* will usually be anchored at



A space-age windjammer, the 440-foot *Wind Star* sailing into its first season in the West Indies.

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Off the shores of Malindi south to Zanzibar lie reefs of rare coral, unknown to all but a few divers

night, which allows visitors time to scour nearby islands like St. Lucia or Bequia. It will continue weekly voyages after its December 13 launch. Depending on the season, the seven-day cruise costs from $1,725 to $2,250 per person, double occupancy. CONTACT YOUR TRAVEL AGENT OR WIND STAR SAIL CRUISES, 7415 NORTHWEST NINETEENTH STREET, SUITE B, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33126; TEL.: 800-258-SAIL OR, IN FLORIDA, 800-341-SAIL.

DIVING ON THE DARK CONTINENT

Tanganyika, the East African landmass that was joined with Zanzibar to make Tanzania, was once given as a birthday present to Kaiser Wilhelm by his cousin Queen Victoria. Allegedly, the kaiser complained to the queen that she had two snowcapped African mountains and he had none. To mollify her cousin, Victoria kept Mount Kenya and gave up the area surrounding Mount Kilimanjaro. The kaiser's present included the Serengeti Plain, perhaps the best place in the world for viewing wild game, with some terrific diving spots. Now, on individually designed trips put together by Mountain Madness, travelers can sample the plain, scuba dive off the brilliant beaches of Malindi, and climb the kaiser's old mountain. Trips are led by Wesley Krause, a certified dive master and the former director of the National Outdoor Leadership School in East Africa. These trips are unusual in that Mountain Madness will tailor trips to individual groups' needs. Tours can be as small as two people or as big as six. Trips are now being planned for early February, but dates are flexible. Cost depends on the exact nature of the trip. CONTACT MOUNTAIN MADNESS, 8659 FAUNTLEE CREST SOUTHWEST, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98116; TEL.: 206-937-8389.

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If scenic views were an exportable commodity, Switzerland would have the healthiest economy in the world. And the best view in a country of nothing but best views? It's probably in Saas Fee, a tiny village that resists all development and demands that every citizen keep his house gabled and wood-shingled. From any part of the mile-long town, visitors can gaze at thirteen unobstructed mountains, each over thirteen thousand feet in altitude. The mountains also protect Saas Fee's beautiful ski slopes from wind and bad weather.

Visitors get to Saas Fee from Brig, which in turn is reached via train from Geneva. The best place to stay in Saas Fee is at the Waldhotel Fletschhorn (call Hansjorg or Irma Dutsch to have one of the staff get your bags in a little electric cart). Irma also cooks for the tiny inn, dishing out some of the best sausage and raclette in Switzerland. Nearby is the Metro Alpin, a train that tunnels skiers through ice and rock to runs that begin above 10,500 feet. The area has fifty kilometers of ski runs, which extend all the way to the village.

Winter lasts six months here, and the town is booked heavily and in advance. Reserve early. The Waldhotel Fletschhorn is 150 to 185 Swiss francs a night per double, and around fifteen more francs per person for full board. CONTACT SWISSAIR OR CALL THE WALDHOTEL FLETSCHHORN DIRECT AT 028-57-21-31. FOR OTHER INFORMATION, WRITE THE TOURIST OFFICE, SAAS FEE 3906 SWITZERLAND; TEL.: 028-57-14-57.

DOWNHILL ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

One place to allay the unmitigated disaster that is New Year's Eve is at Canada's Banff National Park. On seven-day trips sponsored by Ultimate Escapes, guests can



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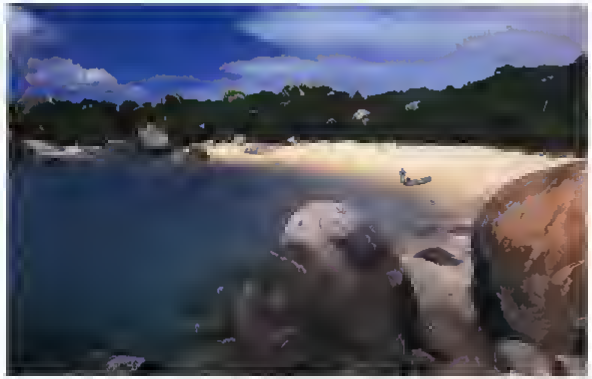
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Palm Springs CALIFORNIA

combine cross-country skiing from isolated backcountry cabins with carousing amid Banff's winter-resort pleasures. In fact, one such trip takes place right in time for the start of 1987.

Each group, made up of eight to fifteen participants, meets in the Calgary airport for transfer to the town of Banff, where guests have the rest of the day to explore the hot mineral baths or practice their cross-country form on a nearby set of frozen lakes. The tour's first full day is spent skiing up to a wilderness cabin that will serve as home base during the five days of touring. Accommodations in the big cabin are dormitory-style, everybody helps cook and clean up, and the food will be bountiful. Guests ski through broad meadows bordered by mountains, the length of each day's touring depending on the will of the group. Finally, everyone heads back to Banff. In town there are some nice historical sites, ice-skating, ice fishing, and downhill skiing. New Year's Eve can be spent either in the quiet backcountry chalet or in town. The dates of the trip are December 28 to January 3; the cost is $695 U.S., including all food, lodging, and ski rental. Guests must bring their own sleeping bags. CONTACT ULTIMATE ESCAPES TRAVEL, 115 SOUTH TWENTY-FIFTH STREET, COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO 80904-9972; TEL.: 800-992-4343.



The captivating hills and harbors of Virgin Gorda can elevate the spirit and restore peace of mind

A VIRGIN AMONG VIRGINS

"Beileb half what yo' see, nuffin what yo' hear," says the Virgin Islands proverb. That's particularly apt in the case of resorts that claim to be yet another undiscovered paradise set up the way "the Caribbean used to be." Still, Virgin Gorda in the British Virgin Islands comes believably close to the claim: a small, green, hilly island with near-perfect weather and deserted white sugar beaches.

You reach Virgin Gorda via San Juan or St. Thomas. From the island's tiny airstrip, visitors are shuttled by van to the Gun Creek boat dock. It's then a five-minute ferry ride to the island's green and lovely North Sound. The first sight on the sound is the Biras Creek Castle, a stone fortress in which guests can drink, dine, and take in sweeping views of the crashing ocean, calm harbor, and nearby mountain peaks. Biras Creek is also the name of one of the best hotels in the islands. A tidy thirty-two-suite complex, Biras boasts a private beach, scuba-diving pool, lighted tennis courts, and windsurfers and sunfish sailboats for the guests to use. Though the place is run with clockwork precision, there are few of the timetables that can make large resorts so dreary. The food in the hotel's restaurant is several cuts above average for the Caribbean, and twice a week barbecues are held on the beach. And should beaches, windsurfing, bicycling, hiking, and sailing begin to pale, you can arrange to learn scuba diving in a short resort course from Kilbride's Underwater tours, headed by treasure diver Burt Kilbride and his son Gary.

The resort opens November 15, between that date and December 21, guests can get an eight-day, seven-night package for $1,430 for two, including meals, plus $10 per person per day service charge and 7-percent tax. Rates during high season—December 22 to April 5—are $370 per day for two, including meals, plus taxes and a small service charge. FOR RESERVATIONS, CONTACT DAVID B. MITCHELL & COMPANY, 200 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016; TEL.: 800-372-1323 OR, IN NEW YORK, 212-696-1323.

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Gaudí's unfinished temple of La Sagrada Familia

Photo research for The Esquire Traveler by Alexandra Truitt

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AUSTRALIA

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T33—Reg Morrison/Weldon Trannies
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THE SNOW IN SPAIN

Spain's Catalonian Pyrenees provide not only great expanses of terrific ski snow, they also boast many natural and man-made wonders that give visitors something to stare at besides ski tips and chalet menus. The best way to get to the popular ski resort of La Molina is via Barcelona, 140 kilometers away. Fly to Barcelona, stay in the stately Hotel Gran Via, chock-a-block with dark Spanish antiques, and check out the unfinished temple of La Sagrada Familia, which Salvador Dalí once called "a cathedral cooked up by a schizoid angel." Then head by railway to Puigcerdá, the thirteenth-century regional capital, which has taken pains to preserve its narrow streets and balconied houses. From there it's only fourteen kilometers by train to the popular resort of La Molina—Supermolina, a seventy-square-kilometer ski area with twenty-one lifts, and drops as high as 3,600 feet. There you glide down summer grazing land on spacious slopes above the tree line, or along well-marked paths through the woods.

February is the warmest, most dependable month for good skiing, and the best place to stay in the area is the Palace Hotel, a thirty-three-room inn that charges $50 a night for a double. People come here to ski, not schmooze, but ski-area night life can be found in a number of bars and restaurants. And nearby are plenty of sights, including the fabulous mountain views of Nuria and Andorra. A nice recuperation after the ski holiday is available at Caldas de Malavella, an ancient Roman spa town located about forty-seven miles from Barcelona. Stay at Vichy Catalan (about $36 for a double), which has its own mineral spa in the hotel. ONE OF THE BEST SPANISH PACKAGES IS BOOKED BY VE TOURS, 18 EAST FORTY-EIGHTH STREET, SUITE 701, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10017, TEL.: 212-758-5757 OR CONTACT THE NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE OF SPAIN, 665 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022; TEL.: 212-759-8822.

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THE GOOD-TIME PLACE

If you took Britain, kicked out the snobs, brought in a ton of sand and sunshine, and threw in a kangaroo, you'd have Australia, mate

BY MICHAEL KINSLEY

"In the pursuit of happiness for ordinary people Australians believe they are already ahead of America."
—Donald Horne,
The Lucky Country



Before they let you into Australia, they decontaminate you. The plane lands, the engines shut off, everyone is ordered not to move. Two men climb aboard wearing gas masks and carrying aerosol spray machines. In total silence, they spray the plane and everyone in it. Then you can get off. Welcome to Australia.

The ostensible purpose is to keep out disease-carrying insects. But this little welcoming ceremony is symbolic. "It's a religious ritual," says Simon Leys, the distinguished Belgian-born sinologist who settled in Australia sixteen years ago. Australians believe they are uniquely blessed on their sunny, comfortable island continent. They don't want the world and its miseries to disrupt their happy equanimity. This is the all-but-explicit subtheme of the short film they show you shortly before landing, called *Declare It for Australia*, in which a bearded Euell Gibbons character roams the Australian landscape, reminds you of how precious Australia's isolation is, and begs you not to destroy it by sneaking in any subversive items, such as a California orange.

"The key to understanding Australia," says my friend Murray Sayle, the famous Australian journalist and half-baked philosopher, "is the interbreeding of the convicts and the guards." In fact, although Australia was founded as a prison colony less than two hundred years ago, few Australians are descended from either prisoners or guards. (Tracing your roots to a convict ship has a Mayflower-type cachet.) But Murray's observation nicely captures the mixture of conservatism and libertinism in the Australian character. One example of this odd mix is Australians' attitude toward alcohol. On the one hand, they—the men, especially—still treasure their reputation as big boozers who can drink any other nationality under the table. The hard-drinking tradition is reflected in an odd institution, the drive-through bottle shop." These are places where you can load up on alcohol without leaving your car. On the other hand, the more puritanical strain in Australians has produced another institution called the booze bus, a mobile police lab that can test your blood for alcohol and arrest you on the spot.

It may seem silly to go halfway around the world just to lie on the beach (where I spent most of my time). But if sunshine's your goal, one practical reason to choose Australia over, say, the Caribbean is that when it's winter here, it's really summer there. The sun stays out until 9:00 P.M. or even later. More important, though, that old saw—"the natives are friendly"—means something completely different in Australia than in traditional winter beach resorts. When you lie on the beach in Australia, or go to a great restaurant, you're enjoying a life that Australians have designed for themselves—not just a show put on for the benefit of outsiders. Off the beach, you're in a culture strange enough to be interesting, but similar enough to our own—same language, for a start—that you can really plunge into it on a short visit. Try that in Japan.

In a way Australia is the American dream. Without all of the self-congratulatory hullabaloo we Americans bring to the attempt, Australians have managed to create a free, prosperous, and virtually classless society. The casual egalitarianism is what I liked best about the country. Almost everyone is middle class: there's little poverty, little great wealth. You cannot tell a person's station in life from her clothes or his accent. "Mateship" is one of the supreme national values. The only powerful snobbery is reverse snobbery, which comes down like a ton of bricks on anyone thought to be putting on airs.

The guidebooks all say that, except in restaurants, nobody in Australia expects a tip. My experience was that no one turns down a tip either, and I never met the cliché cabdriver who actually rounds the fare downward. But even in the luxury precincts, like the fancy hotels and restaurants, there was no bowing and scraping. If that sort of thing makes you uncomfortable (as it should), you'll enjoy visiting a country where everyone is friendly and helpful, but nobody is slobbering all over you. Australians have that wonderful English decency, but without English class attitudes and without the English postwar gloominess. They are Brits with sunshine, inside and out.

The traditional underside of Australian mateship has been a certain parochial xenophobia, merging into Anglo-Saxon racism. Us against the world, especially against Asia. The ugliest aspect of the traditional Australia-for-the-white-man attitude was the cruel treatment of the aborigines (slang term: *abos*), sadly similar to our own treatment of the American Indians. Full-blooded aborigines are nowhere to be seen in the major cities. There are only 150,000 or so left—barely a percentage point of the population. But the postwar influx of immigrants from Asia and Southern and Eastern Europe, and the growth of international business and travel, have done a lot to bring Australia out of its shell. The spraying ritual is symbolic of an attitude that is, happily, dying out.

According to many Australians I talked to, egalitarianism and the leisure ethic have also produced a widespread lack of ambition, even a suspiciousness of ambition. Rupert Murdoch, to my surprise, is a far-from-typical Australian. The approved attitude is: You've got your house, you've got your boat, the beach is free—what more do you want? What Donald Horne noted in his classic 1964 study of Australia, *The Lucky Country* (must reading before you go), seems to be even more true today: "A nation more concerned with styles of life than with achievement has managed to achieve what may be the most evenly prosperous society in the world. It has done this in a social climate largely inimical to . . . the desire for excellence (except in sport) and in which there is less and less acclamation of hard work."

Some Australians are less complacent about this than they were two decades ago. They see Asian immigrants keeping grocery stores open until midnight, while Australians still close at 5:30. More galling, they see themselves being passed as a nation by the Asian countries they have condescended to for two centuries.

But this isn't your problem. If something in the Australian climate turns a hunger for work into a thirst for leisure, that makes it a perfect place to take a vacation. Lie back and enjoy it.

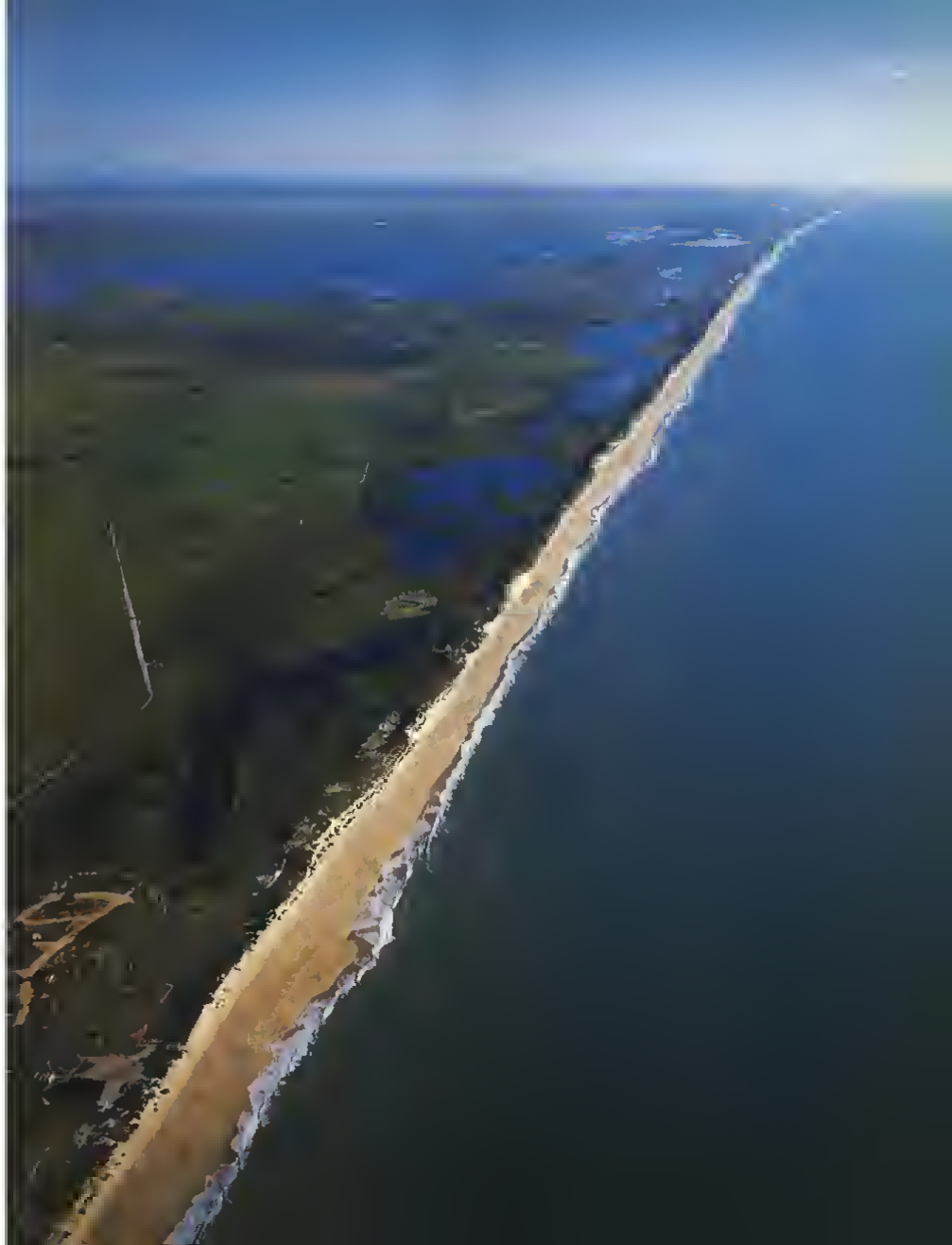


You may feel it's silly to go all the way to Australia and not visit the "outback"—the vast, empty interior of the country—but it's not. For one thing, your options for experiencing the outback on a short trip are not appealing. You can sign up for a one-day tourist flight to an "authentic" sheep ranch. You can devote a week to a cross-continental train trip, but this seems disproportionate since the point of the experience (say those who've done it) is that the continent is very large, very flat, and

The 90-Mile Beach as it appears to the gulls of Victoria

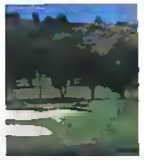
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MICHAEL KINSLEY *is the editor of* The New Republic, *where he writes the "TRB" column.*



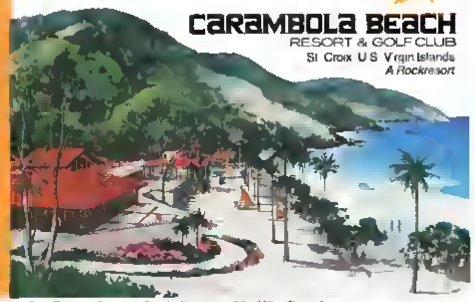
CARAMBOLA

Caneel, Little Dix, and now Carambola. The new Rockresort on St. Croix.



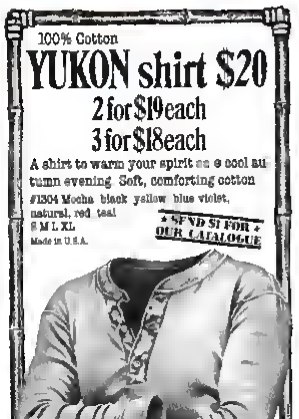
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very empty.

Or you can visit Ayers Rock. Ayers Rock evokes superlatives. The Australian Tourist Commission calls it the largest rock in the world. Murray Sayle describes it as the world's most overrated tourist attraction. Less brutally, Ayers Rock is a rather pure example of what the tourist industry calls a "destination"—someplace to go to, as opposed to someplace to be. Going to Ayers Rock involves flying about two thousand kilometers from Sydney to Alice Springs, at population 15,000 the only "city" in the interior. Then it's another five hundred kilometers by plane or bus to the rock. It's two miles long, one mile wide, and a little over a thousand feet high. You can look at it, climb to the top of it, and then fly back.

I skipped it, along with the rest of the outback and the west coast as well. After all, the outback isn't what Australia is about. Australia is actually one of the world's most urbanized societies. (Or, more accurately, suburbanized.) If your time and money are limited (internal flying in Australia is expensive, since deregulation hasn't yet arrived), don't feel ashamed of sticking to the east coast, where most of Australia's fifteen million people live. The real Australia is lying on the beach, and if you want to get a genuine sense of the country, that's where you should be too.

Presumably you'll start out in Sydney. Sydney is Los Angeles and San Francisco put together: glamorously urban, sophisticated, casual, laid-back. On the subject of things not to be ashamed of, don't be ashamed of starting your visit with a trip to the top of Sydney Tower, one of those tacky observation decks in a downtown shopping development. It's good for orientation—and, as with all such structures, when you're in it, you don't have to look at it.

The other hackneyed tourist activity is a tour-boat ride around Sydney Harbour—but this one you can skip, because there's a better and cheaper way. Instead, take the regular commuter ferry from the same downtown Circular Quay to a suburb called Manly. The trip takes about half an hour, and (for $1.20 Australian) provides one of the world's spectacular urban vistas: the Sydney skyline, the famous Opera House, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the glistening bay.

The Opera House complex lives up to its reputation as one of the architectural masterpieces of the twentieth century. It is gorgeous from every perspective, but the view from the water is by far the best, with the various structures merging into one tumultuous impression of wind and sail. Designed by a Danish architect named Joern Utzon, of whom little has been heard since, and opened in 1973, the Opera House triumphantly avoids the sterility of orthodox modernism without sinking into the facetious gimmickery of postmodernism. It's a truly romantic modern building. (And to a Washingtonian, it's a reminder of what a disastrous lost opportunity the Kennedy Center is, on a roughly similar site.)



Sydney's Opera House and Harbour Bridge form one of the world's spectacular urban vistas

From a ferry landing it's a five-minute walk along an arcade to Manly Beach, one of twenty-eight public beaches in Sydney. As throughout Australia, there are beaches in Sydney for every taste: ocean beaches with large waves, protected beaches with calm waters, beaches for surfing, beaches for swimming, crowded beaches, empty beaches, family beaches, yuppie beaches, nude beaches. Sydney-siders analyze the flavor and texture of different beaches like oenophiles discussing years and vintages. Manly (named after an early explorer's description of the natives) is the most urban, crowded, and honky-tonk of Sydney's beaches, but on a summer weekday afternoon it was lively, pleasant, and far from mobbed. Connoisseurs say Manly has weathered better than Bondi, the famous surfing beach, which has a rather forlorn, aging-hippie feel to it.

About a half-hour drive from downtown, in Watsons Bay, one of the little coves that lie in the fancy suburbs northwest of Sydney, is the famous restaurant called Doyle's on the Beach. Roughly the equivalent of a place like Anthony's Pier 4 in Boston, it is enormous, chaotic, somewhat pricy (forty dollars Australian for my big dinner, including tip and wine), and touristy. On the other hand, so what? You're a tourist. The fish is excellent, the view is heartbreaking. Before or after dinner take a stroll in the Gap, a long, narrow park that runs along a dramatic cliff starting about a block from the restaurant. You get the lights of Sydney in one direction, a desolate sea vista in the other.

Another nice day-excursion is north over the Harbour Bridge and up the Barrenjoey Point to Palm Beach, about forty kilometers from downtown. The peninsula is a series of mildly funky (but rapidly gentrifying) little towns reminiscent of what the beach towns south of Los Angeles must have been like in the 1950s. Pull over and take a dip anytime you want. Each beach, though uncrowded, has parking, lifeguards, toilets, changing rooms—all free—and food and drink at nearby shopping areas. Palm Beach, at the far end of the peninsula, is a bit tonier (though still a far cry from its American namesake, thank God), with a couple of the Sydney area's trendiest restaurants, Reflections and Barrenjoey House.

But you needn't drive forty kilometers to find a trendy restaurant. The new bourgeois obsession with food, which may have crested in America a couple years ago, was still in full flood when I visited Australia early in 1986. The national cuisine of meat pies, chips, and beer has virtually died out. Nouvelle and ethnic cooking are the order of the day. Everyone you meet is an authority on wine. One of the most influential men in Sydney is the restaurant critic of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Leo Schofield. His annual *Good Food Guide*, available in bookstores, passes oracular judgment on newcomers and old standbys alike. Add Australia's newfound food enthusiasm to its bounty of high-quality raw ingredients—seafood, meat, and produce—and it's hard to have a bad meal.

The best meal I had in Sydney was at Bob & Di's, a local fish-and-chips place in Millers Point, a not-yet-gentrified neighborhood adjacent to a touristy area called the Rocks. Bob's at the fish fryer, and his wife, Di, serves with the help of their nine-year-old daughter. Di's mother cooks the peach crumble (and also dinner for Bob and Di after the restaurant closes at 9:00 P.M.).

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As for hotels, I got a complimentary room at the brand-new Inter-Continental, a modern tower stuck on top of a lovingly restored Victorian building and courtyard. Perhaps I was blinded by gratitude, but it struck me as a wonderful hotel, comfortable and well-located, with great views. Of course, there's not much local flavor in these global superluxury chain hotels. A little electronic sign in the elevator informs international businessmen on the go what floor they're on, the time, the outside temperature, the name of the hotel, and the fact that they're in Sydney, Australia. But your options are somewhat limited—downtown Sydney doesn't feature many charming little inns—and at $125 Australian (about eighty-five American dollars) a night, the Inter-Continental is not a wildly extravagant choice. In the spirit of journalistic objectivity I stuck my nose into the other superglorioso luxury hotel, the Regent, frequently listed by those who know such things as one of the best in the world. It looked nice too.

If you want a sense of how big and empty Australia is without actually driving across it, take an excursion to Canberra, the national capital, three hundred kilometers southwest of Sydney. It's about as far from Sydney to Canberra as from New York to Washington, and both corridors are the most crowded of their respective countries, the difference being that the most crowded corridor in Australia is nevertheless virtually empty for long stretches. Even though Canberra is a bit inland I drove south along the coast. Once past the drab Sydney suburbs the countryside turns lush and rolling and you're on one of Australia's few superhighways for a brief stretch. I stopped at Batemans Bay, an unpretentious collection of family-type resort beaches, and for forty-three dollars Australian (peak-season, how-much-can-I-rip-off-this-American rate) got a motel suite with kitchen directly on a surfy beach. Several tiny children were happily bobbing on the waves as I rushed into the water and immediately got knocked flat on my face. As I stumbled out, a little girl looked at me and burst into tears. Her father barked, "Get back in the ocean. You're bleeding all over the beach." These were the only harsh words I heard during my whole visit to Australia. It was time, I decided, to head inland.

The drive from Batemans Bay to Canberra is a two hour synopsis of the Australian landscape. You start along the coast, then take a series of dramatic hairpin turns through a heavily wooded mountain pass before coming out into a straight road through a perfectly flat plain decorated with scrub brush and WATCH OUT FOR KANGAROOS signs.

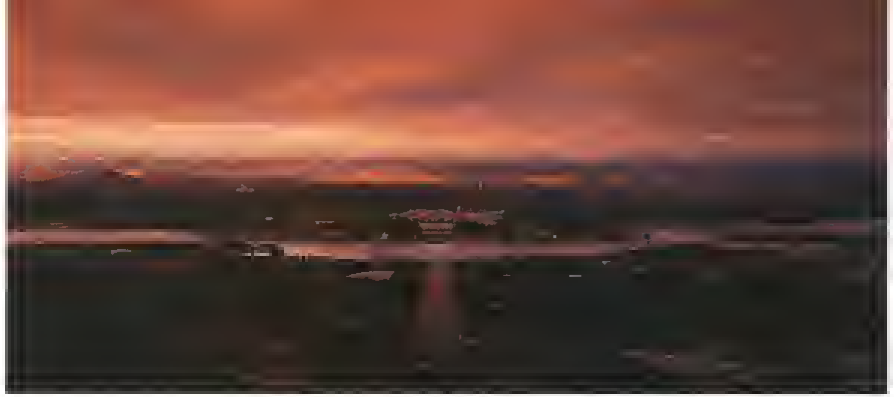
Sydneysiders sneer at Canberra, of course. It's a planned city, rather sterile and squeaky clean, full of government employees (60 percent of the population). No indigenous culture, no night life, and so on. Nevertheless, I liked the place. The lake may be artificial, but it's still attractive. The parks and bike paths and public sculptures convey a certain oppressive civic earnestness, but they're also nice amenities. The dramatic vistas up still-empty boulevards are a bit contrived, but so were the vistas of Haussmann's Paris and L'Enfant's Washington.

The other driving excursion I recommend out of Sydney is to the Hunter Valley, a major wine region about two and a half hours to the north. My nose, not wildly sensitive under the best of circumstances, was put completely out of commission by my ocean tumble. But you don't have to be able to taste the wine in order to enjoy wine tasting. Hunter is much prettier than California's Napa Valley. The various vineyards are scattered in rolling countryside, rather than lined up along a straight highway, so you should probably get ahold of the map of small family vineyards put out by the Hunter Valley Wine Society before you start out on any oenophilic expeditions.

At Peterson's Family Winery, Shirley Peterson was minding the store. Ian Peterson had been a pharmacist in a nearby town called Toronto. The Petersons bought their land in 1964, planning to breed cattle, and planted their first grapes in 1971. For a decade they sold the crop to other wineries but started to get annoyed because, says Mrs. Peterson, "we saw them winning awards with our grapes." So they started producing their own wine, and for three years running, the Petersons' wines have scored more points at the Hunter Valley Wine Show than those of any other winery.

At the Sutherland winery, Neil Sutherland was manning the salesroom himself. His wife was taking a bit of R & R in Sydney before the rigors of the February grape harvest. He smiled benignly when I told him I'd just been chatting with Mrs. Peterson. He likes the Petersons but thinks they're a bit old hat. Mr. Sutherland was the CEO of a multinational corporation based in Hong Kong when it got swallowed up by a bigger multinational and he got out with a golden parachute. So he returned to Australia, took a wine-making degree at Wagga Wagga University, and planted his first grapes in 1979.

The place to stay in the Hunter Valley is Peppers Guest House, an inn on a hillside in Pokolbin. It looks like a charming renovated farmhouse, but it actually was built from scratch in 1984 by three enterprising young business people with a clever marketing concept: combining the amenities of a luxury hotel with the charm of a country inn. It was here that I had my best meal



Sydneysiders scoff at the squeaky-cleanliness of Canberra, but Canberries like it that way

in Australia. To start, a dish that involved mussels and mangoes marinated in port with asparagus. Then I passed up the marinated buffalo fillets in mushroom and burgundy in favor of something called jewfish (must have another name in this country). Finally, ice cream with fresh blackberries. Damage: thirty-seven dollars Australian, including tip and a half bottle of Neil Sutherland's Semillon. Breakfast is great, too. If you've got another night, try Casuarina, a hot-pink restaurant located in the middle of a vineyard with a similar nouvelle-extravaganza menu.

Oh yes. Hunter Valley is where I saw my only live wild kangaroo. I was out for a morning jog and it jogged right past me.

Melbourne, the financial capital, is the most conservative and Anglophile of Australian cities, laid out in neat square blocks with formal parks and many wonderful piles of Victorian masonry. Sydneysiders consider Melbourne stuffy—Boston to Sydney's Los Angeles. At the same time, though, Melbourne is the most ethnically diverse Australian city, having gotten a disproportionate share of the postwar immigration from Southern Europe and Asia. There are more Greeks there than in any other city except Athens and New York.

Several Sydneysiders, asked to recommend a good beach in Melbourne, all said the same thing: "There are no beaches in Melbourne." What this means is that the nearest nice beach is a ten-minute trolley ride away from the city center, and you have to drive all of an hour if you're looking for serious surf, as Melbourne sits on a bay. Beginning at Torquay, about an hour from the city center, is the Great Ocean Road along the continent's southern coast. With hairpin turns, cliffs, and spectacular views, it resembles the Pacific Coast Highway in California, and every couple of kilometers there's another public beach. On a sunny Saturday afternoon in high summer, there were long stretches of sand occupied by only one or two people.

The Great Ocean Road goes for hundreds of kilometers, but I only drove as far as Lorne, a couple of hours from Melbourne. There I stopped for lunch at Willo's Devonshire Teas, a tiny, spotless restaurant with a garden and terrace overlooking the ocean, specializing in homemade scones, tea sandwiches, and fresh berries and cream. You would not likely find a place like this near Sydney. It was a little "twee," as the British say (Sydneysiders probably would be harsher), but nice. England in the sun.

Driving the other direction, east, out of Melbourne takes you down the Mornington Peninsula along Port Phillip Bay, through fancy suburbs blending into resort towns, each with its own beach. Take the beach road, not the main highway, to get the full flavor. And stop at a wonderful, trendy carryout in Mount Martha called Flouch's. Somewhere down this way you can take a boat to Phillip Island and catch the nightly "parade of the fairy penguins." It's one of Australia's most famous tourist attractions. Let me know what it's like, I skipped it.

Melbourne is even more food-crazed than Sydney, and with an ethnic emphasis. The streets are lined with restaurants. Indeed, several downtown streets are taken over by restaurants in the summer. They're closed to traffic and filled with tables and chairs. Waiters from rows of adjacent bistros and trattorias weave in and out. *The Melbourne Age* puts out a *Good Food Guide* identical to the one *The Sydney Morning Herald* puts out for Sydney, so you can plot your gluttony with care. Melbourne has a tradition of BYO restaurants, meaning that many—even some fancy ones—don't have a liquor license, so you must bring your own. It's actually quite festive to see fashionably dressed couples strolling down the street swinging wine-bottle-shaped bags as they head for an evening out. (This practice will give you an excuse to buy a few bottles if you go to the Hunter Valley.)

The Melbourne Regent Hotel, which occupies the top half of an I. M. Pei skyscraper, put me up in the Royal Suite, about three times the size of my apartment in Washington. In the contest among luxury hotels to see how many little items they can stamp their name on and leave in the bathroom, this one will be hard to beat. Arrayed on the marble vanity of the master bathroom in my royal suite were: *savon parfumé*, spray *eau de toilette*, deodorant *parfumé*, *poudre apres-bain parfumé*, soap *ordinaire en baite plastique*, *savon Monsieur de Givenchy*, shaving cream, aftershave, and *atomisseur* deodorant spray, *tout aussi de Monsieur de Givenchy*; a Regent sewing kit; a bottle of Regent shampoo, several Q-tips in a Regent plastic bag; two emery boards, two shoe-polishing cloths; a spray mouth freshener; Regent soap powder; dental floss; Elizabeth Arden Visible Difference Special Moisture Formula for Bodycare; Alka-Seltzer in a special Regent package; and a little cloth purse containing—what? Yes, it's another bar of soap: Evergreen Eucalyptus soap, this time. Now I know why VIPs always look so clean. Only one trouble: no toilet paper. (Just kidding.)

But the spirit of Australia—cocky, democratic, friendly, unpretentious—can't be snuffed out, even in the denatured atmosphere of a fancy international hotel. Traipsing across the lobby after a day at the beach, dragging a sandy Regent towel across the carpet and looking quite grimy in my bathing suit and T-shirt, I felt like a thorough disgrace to all those bars of soap placed at my disposal fifty flights up. I apologized to the porter for my appearance. "Oh, that's all right," she smirked, handing me the key to the Royal Suite. "We've seen worse than you in here."

PRACTICALITIES

GETTING THERE: Los Angeles is the gateway city for most flights to Australia. United and Pan Am—the only U.S. airlines offering service down under, allow you to connect to all major cities. Qantas is the major carrier of U.S. passengers, with frequent flights out of L.A., San Francisco, and Hawaii. The flight from L.A. to Sydney is a good fifteen hours. The other airlines serving Australia from the United States are Air New Zealand, Continental, UTA French, and Canadian Pacific.

CLIMATE: Remember that Australia is in the Southern Hemisphere, so the seasons are the opposite of ours. Spring begins in our fall, summer in December, fall in March, and winter in June. In terms of geography, Sydney is about as far from the equator as Los Angeles. Melbourne is roughly the equivalent of San Francisco.

THINGS TO REMEMBER: Australia has been hanging upside down for quite a while. It should come as no surprise that more than just the seasons are reversed. All driving takes place on the wrong side of the street. Watch the pedestrians, too. They also travel on the left, and make revolving doors a challenge to foreigners. And of course, the funnels in the drama spiral clockwise.

GETTING AROUND: For local travel your best bet is to rent a car. Car rental is as routine there as it is in this country. While the main highways between cities are well kept, you don't have to go very far off them to find unpaved roads. If your trek is long, plan ahead of time—accommodations can be few and far between. If you're planning to do extensive traveling by train, you might want to pick up an Australpass, which is available outside of Australia. For longer trips, such as the cross-continental jaunt to Perth, which from October through January will be the site of this year's America's Cup, there are a number of domestic airlines, airtime from Sydney is four and a half hours. With the purchase of several offshore islands by a couple of Australia's major domestic airlines, the Great Barrier Reef is becoming increasingly accessible and affordable. Check with your travel agent for accommodations and prices.

CUSTOMS: They spray you on the way in, they tax you on the way out. Be prepared for a fee of twenty dollars payable only in Australian currency on departure. Plans are under way to have this included in the price of the ticket.

CURRENCY: The Australian dollar is now worth about sixty-five cents. Traveler's checks and credit cards are widely accepted, with American Express, Diners Club, Carte Blanche, Mastercard, and Visa being the most prominent. Other cards could get you in trouble, so you might want to check them out beforehand with your travel agent.

THINGS TO SEE: Melbourne is the home of an exciting, albeit mad, form of human behavior known as Australian Rules football—a sport so wild it makes its American namesake look like square dancing. The season runs year-round except for the summer.

Sports aficionados might also want to check out the Melbourne Cup, Australia's Kentucky Derby, an event that almost literally shuts the continent down on the first Tuesday of November. For more refined pleasures, try Sydney. The city, in reaction to the "ocker" (Aussie for red-neck) stereotype, has grown quite proud of its arts. The season of the internationally acclaimed Sydney Opera Company, for instance, runs from June to March.

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GONE FASHIN'

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Arnold Gingrich's dedication to angling was awesome. The former editor in chief of Esquire had a daily routine that delivered him to the New York office at 7:30 A.M. via bus and subway from New Jersey. I often had dinner with him at his home in Ridgewood. This meant arising at 4:00 A.M. to commute to our magazine destinations because, come hell or high water, Arnold had to get in at least an hour of fishing at the local Joe Jefferson Club.

Jane Gingrich said that when Arnold and I went fishing we looked like two editors from *Hobo News*. I don't think that was completely true, but after I introduced Arnold to another angling pal, that sartorially impeccable hoteleer Charles Ritz, who practically invented the après-ski boot, Arnold did clean up his act, so to speak. Me too. (This was about the time I did a TV commercial and appeared on location in the Bahamas in my usual fishing threads, which included the pants from my old combat fatigues. The director turned to the PA and said, "*Oy vay!* Get this schmuck some clothes!") Arnold's frayed black shirt gave way to colorful prints, and that pair of baggy black corduroy trousers that he wore when he was living the life of a Swiss winemaker in 1947 was replaced by pastel chinos. I suppose his renaissance occurred when Charlie Ritz asked me to shoot Arnold in action on the Beaver Kill for the jacket of his book, *Pris sur le Vif (A Fly Fisher's Life*, Holt, 1959). When we finally received our review copies about two years later, Arnold phoned me—having completely forgotten about the photo.

"Did you see that book jacket of Charlie's? What happened to the guy? He's looking slobby."

I didn't try to answer that, but when Arnold discovered who the angler was, he again turned out in a style suitable for Esquire.

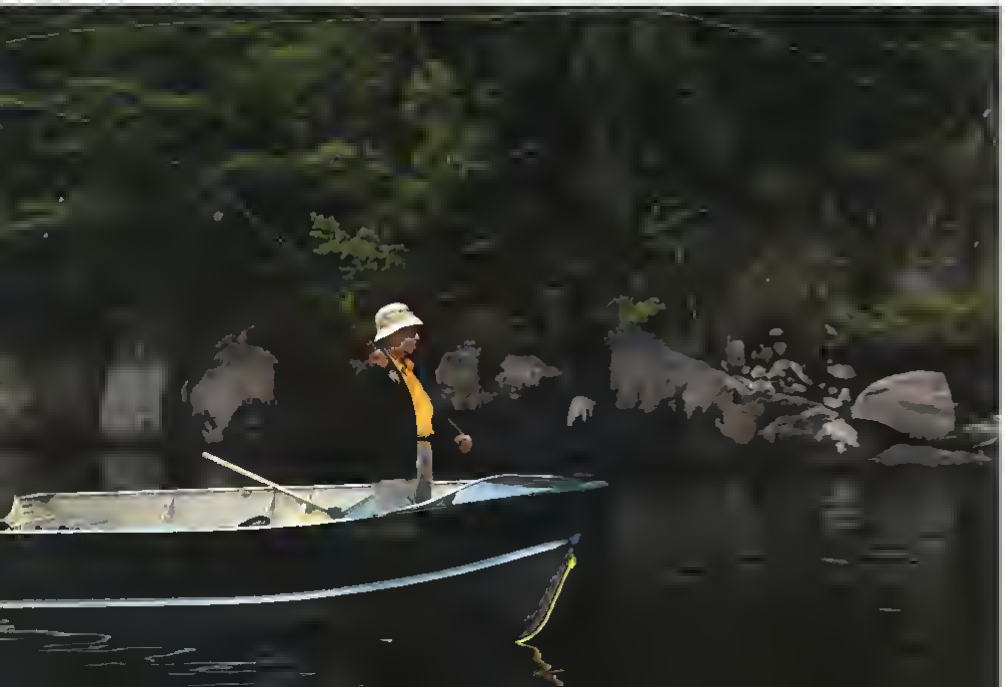
Time was when a dank cabin, an outhouse, a lumpy mattress, and a bit of moose hair in the beef stew represented the typical fishing camp. Lord knows it was a *dolce far niente* existence: you could come to table in your underwear. Having been an observer of the world's angling scene for four decades, I have witnessed many dramatic changes not only in travel and space-age tackle with its boron and graphite rods, but in the ambience and fashion of angling itself. The concept of a "camp" has now evolved into such luxurious settings as Bristol Bay Lodge and Golden Horn Lodge in Alaska, Oregon's Steamboat Inn, the rustic splendor of Middle Fork Lodge in Idaho, Wyoming's Crescent H Ranch, and Vermejo Park Ranch in New Mexico.

Recently, I made a trip to Lake of the Woods in Ontario, which is documented on these pages. I came to join two old friends, Robert D'Ambruoso and Herb Wyatt, at Minaki Lodge. Robert, who owns a tackle shop (Headwaters Angling) in Ennis, Montana, is one of the state's most skilled guides and a flycaster of championship caliber. Herb is a professional fishery biologist from Valdosta, Georgia, a credential that sums up his angling expertise. The 1,500-square-mile lake straddling the Manitoba and Minnesota borders does not give the impression that it is a lake, as it contains a mind-boggling fourteen thousand poplar- and balsam-studded islands. On a similar grand scale, the lodge complex accommodates three hundred guests—hardly your backwoods fishing camp. Nevertheless we were prepared for what has become a new dimension in angling—right down to a Jacuzzi, a piano bar, and a roast rack of lamb.

Minaki is not the kind of place that allows its guests to come to breakfast in their skivvies. Fortunately we were provided with a wardrobe by Arnold Gingrich's old firm and were suitably attired for both table and fishing. This duplicity of purpose somehow reminds me of Charlie Ritz's shoe shop in the chic Faubourg St. Honoré: always in midflight, M. Ritz would have abandoned his hotel at the drop of a truffle. His manager on the Faubourg was Pierre Creusevaut, then world-professional-casting champion, and the storeroom was one vast rod-building shop. While Pierre attended to the feet of fashionable Paris out front, clients always risked being left barefoot when Charlie was out back designing a new rod taper. We can't say that our precious hours at Minaki added many fish to our total, but then catching them was not as important as being with old friends in the outdoors.

—A. J. McClane

FASHION BY KIM JOHNSON GROSS AND JOHN MATHER

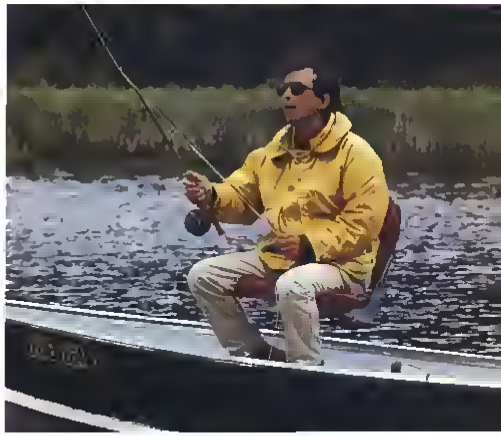




Photographs by Alen MacWeeney



Opposite page: A. J. McClane wears a green wool-melton zip-front blouson jacket ($160), by The Heartland Company. Orange heavyweight cotton-corduroy shirt ($32.50), by Ron Chereskin. Above: Herb Wyatt wears a three-quarter-length pigskin jacket ($750), by Ideas from Massimo Osti by C.P. Company of Italy. Below: Robert D'Ambruoso wears a three-quarter-length yellow mercerized-cotton jacket with hood ($310), by Boneville by Massimo Osti. (Store credits, page T55.)



A. J. McCLANE *is the author of many books on fishing, including* McClane's New Standard Fishing Encyclopedia.









This page, above, McClane wears a pigskin suede jacket ($149), by Banana Republic. Cotton shirt ($44), by British Khaki. Left of McClane, Wyatt wears a plaid wool-and-mohair jacket ($170), by Basco. At right, Wyatt wears a three-quarter-length suede jacket with leather collar ($595), by Henry Cottons. Opposite page, clockwise from top left: D'Ambruoso wears a stone-washed cotton jacket ($197.50) and cotton-flannel shirt ($75), by Polo by Ralph Lauren. Wyatt wears a hand-knit wool sunburst-pattern crew-neck sweater ($120), by Jeffrey Banks. D'Ambruoso wears a three-quarter-length red cotton-poplin parka ($200), by Trekka, and a hand-knit wool Indian-motif sweater ($225), by Robert Comstock.







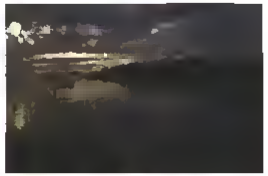




From far left: Wyatt wears a hand-knit wool abstract-plaid crew-neck sweater ($215), by Alexander Julian, and heavyweight wool shirt ($50), by Pendleton. McClane wears a wind-cheating hand-knit cable sweater ($145) and plaid cotton shirt ($32.50), by Robert Stock. D'Ambruoso wears a mustard-tone wool sweater with diamond pattern ($140), by Henry Cottons, and blue cotton-jacquard shirt ($58), by British Khaki.



From left, Wyatt wears a single-breasted plaid wool sport jacket ($410) over a rayon shirt ($98), by Perry Ellis. McClone wears a single-breasted wool sport jacket with peak lapels ($495) over a gold cashmere cardigan sweater ($350) and block-plaid cotton-chambray shirt ($48), by Alexander Julian. D'Ambruoso wears a plaid wool cardigan sweater ($97.50) over a plaid cotton-flannel shirt ($48.50), by Jeffrey Banks.




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And at Four Seasons, that's exactly what we do. We're a group of 20 grand hotels in North America's most important cities, sensitive to today's changing needs and lifestyles—on the belief that a grand hotel should adapt to its guests. Not the other way around.

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We also realize that many people prefer to travel with only carry-on luggage. So our rooms are furnished with bathrobes, hair dryers and other essentials you might not be able to fit into a single overnight bag.

And we realize that people don't want to interrupt their healthy lifestyles when they're on the road. So we see to it that they don't have to—by providing workout gear and jogging maps in all our hotels, and state-of-the-art health clubs in most of them.

We realize, in short, that every time you depart from home, you're also departing from your normal routine. And our job is to do everything we can to keep that departure from turning into a disruption.

So unlike those hotels that seem to be overly preoccupied with recreating the atmosphere of bygone centuries, Four Seasons is preoccupied with the needs and demands of present-day travellers.

We assume, after all, that your idea of a successful business trip doesn't include travelling backwards in time.

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The Mandalay
Las Colinas Inn and Conference Center
Four Seasons Fitness Resort and Spa
Houston:
Four Seasons Inn on the Park
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New York
The Pierre
Newport Beach
Philadelphia
San Antonio
San Francisco
The Clift
Seattle
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Toronto:
Yorkville Inn on the Park
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Inn on the Park

Call (800) 268 6282 or your travel agent

Four Seasons Hotels

See Reader Service Card after page 32 of The Traveler.

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THE BUSINESS TRAVELER

by David Reed and Jane E. Lasky

NEWS & ADVICE

"Upscale economy"—that's what business travelers demand these days, the pampering you're used to at a price your company will pay. The travel industry is busting its budgets to make it seem as if you're getting more for less. But are you? We'll help you find the real deals and avoid the raw ones—and pick up some bonus miles in the process.

ILLUSTRATIONS: JAVIER ROMERO



SHUTTLE SHIFTS

The "cattle run," the unaffectionate nickname for northeast-corridor shuttle flights, no longer has to be a stampede. This month, **Pan Am** is replacing New York Air as Eastern's competitor on the Boston–New York–Washington route, and the results should surprise you. "A new standard of passenger comfort and convenience," proclaims Pan Am, and that includes seat assignments and checked baggage before boarding, plus the comfort of 727-200 and Airbus aircraft (with refreshments aloft). Look for hourly flights from LaGuardia to Boston and Washington, plus several daily nonstops between Boston and Washington. Meanwhile, New York Air has shifted its shuttle emphasis to Newark, with sixty flights daily between there and Washington's National and Boston's Logan airports.

UNITING THE PACIFIC

Not only does **United Airlines** fly to all fifty states—the only airline to do so—but now it touches down in thirteen Pacific Basin cities formerly served by Pan Am. More than eighty flights a week compose what United calls its Royal Pacific Service, and you can use any leftover Pan Am Pacific-route tickets or reservations to fly them. From the U.S. gateways of New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Honolulu, Seattle, and Portland, United flies to Auckland, Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong, Manila, Melbourne, Osaka, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Sydney, Taipei, and Tokyo. Considering United's massive route network here at home, that means connections to Asia and down under from more than 162 cities without changing airlines.

COUNTER TERROR

Terrorism used to be a subject the airlines would hush up, until the explosive incidents got too loud to ignore. Now security heads the airlines' promotional priorities. Rather than crying uncle, they are raising the ante with stringent new strategies that may cost some time but save your life.

Check in ninety minutes before transatlantic flights, says **American Airlines**, because extensive inspection of *all* baggage—checked and carry-on—is now the norm. Know the contents of each bag in order to answer questions about them, and do not carry any packages for others if you do not know the contents. Be prepared to give your passport number when making a reservation, be sure your travel agent has it if he or she will be booking your seat.

Pan Am, meanwhile, is publicizing its heretofore unheralded World Services security unit. Long employed at several U.S. military bases, Pan Am World Services includes highly trained detection experts and sophisticated screening equipment that is now being made standard at Pan Am's international gateways here, in Europe, and the Middle East. In line with its new and highly visible Alert security program, Pan Am urges international travelers to plan their airport check-in for two hours before takeoff time. Here's your chance to finally read *Gone with the Wind*—which the good old days of carefree continent-hopping surely are.

CUTTING IT CLOSE

Let's face it—sleeping on an airplane can be about as restful as a siesta in Pamplona. If you can, why not take the time to take the tram? **Amtrak** can tuck you into an honest-to-goodness bed, between sheets, behind a locked door—and serve you a free dinner, a wine and cheese snack, stationery, and morning juice and coffee wake-up with complimentary newspaper. Where no dining car is available, such as on the Boston–Washington *Night Owl* and the New York–Washington *Executive Sleeper*, continental breakfast is provided. And don't forget another American railway tradition: a free shoeshine while you sleep.

Metroliner passengers can shave their train-station arrival closer with Amtrak's new A Plus ticket-pickup service for the high-speed northeast-corridor trains. Reservations or changes in reservations made up to thirty minutes prior to departure can be picked up anytime during the hour before the train leaves. Look for new "will call" windows in New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., open Monday through Friday, 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

GEARING FOR OVERDRIVE

Your favorite rental-car company calls them mileage caps. Sounds innocuous enough until you learn that this is yet another bit of fallout from soaring insurance rates and the plummeting sale prices of used rental cars. **Hertz, Avis, Budget, National**, and most of their feisty competitors have capitulated to mileage caps: a per-mile charge, usually 20 to 25 cents, for every mile over 100 or 150 miles a day or 1,000 a week. Oh, the car-rental companies are proclaiming that this is a way to charge the long-distance driver for his

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many miles, while rewarding the around-town shuttler with lower daily rates. That's true, but unless you're used to traveling on a leash, you may want to check the smaller car renters for lower rates *and* unlimited mileage. Indeed, lower gasoline prices are putting larger cars within rental reach of junior executives. And that's what we consider upscale economy.

IN BETWEEN STATIONS

If listening to the hum of your engine is not enough to keep you from going stir crazy on those long stretches of strange highway, tune in to **Radio Map.** Steve Marlow got so tired of scanning the dial for some musical accompaniment to his highway hauls that he found all the right wavelengths for the Southeast-Seaboard states and compiled them in booklet form. He's working up Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee. *Radio Map* charts city pairs—principal, loop or belt, and spur routes between major cities—with links to every FM radio format available, classical to country, hard-news talk shows to good-news gospel. Stations are listed in driving sequence and keyed to simple interstate maps. Digital radios can be tuned ahead for push-button station anticipation. For copies, send $3.50 (postpaid) to *Radio Map*, P.O. Box 1602, Greenville, South Carolina 29602.



GET THE MESSAGE

We'll give hotel operators the benefit of the doubt when it comes to taking messages for guests. Unfortunately, our experience gives us a lot of doubt and too little benefit. But a leading midwestern hotel has gone beyond the call of duty to settle the message mess. At the recently renovated **Chicago Hilton and Towers,** formerly the Conrad Hilton, guests may now order a new in-room amenity—a personal telephone-answering machine. Within minutes of check-in, the equipment is installed and instructions are given for taping your own answering announcement. The cost is $20 per stay. A beeper comes with the package, so you are never further than a phone call away from retrieving your messages.

GEMS ON THE THAMES

One great cure for jet lag is to take a Jacuzzi shortly after arrival—if you can find one. The **Park Lane Hotel** in Piccadilly offers that rarity in foggy London town. Though the hotel is art deco almost all the way, its bathrooms are more 1980s than 1920s. They're vast, bright, and covered in white Italian marble. On a recent visit, an inordinate amount of time was spent in the tub, really a sunken Jacuzzi, one of fifteen in the hotel. Ask for one when you book through Omni Hotels. 800-THE-OMNI.

Not to be upstaged, the historic **Savoy** on the Strand offers some of the most elegant suites we've ever enjoyed. Indeed, their multimillion-dollar overhaul just completed has made every room a business traveler's dream. Westminster Cable TV brings in sixteen television channels—but by January you can have your personal computer hooked up to the television to access a data base or send electronic mail. You can even bank from your bedroom, no bowler hat required. Let the Savoy savants know when you'll land at Heathrow: a hotel staffer will await to head you in the right direction or possibly pick you up with a hotel car. For reservations at the Savoy, call 800-223-6800; in Alaska and New York State, call collect 212-838-3110.

DALLAS DAZZLE

When Philip Johnson designed Dallas's new Crescent complex in the style of a mega-château, he kept the age-old Texan aesthetic in mind: that is, he built it big. The soaring Great Hall lobby of the central **Hotel Crescent Court** links an eighteen-story office building (with the hottest new private club in town under its mansard roof) to a Versailles-like courtyard of ultra-chic shops and galleries around a five-story fountain. We like that the Crescent Court is away from downtown Dallas but connected by an efficient free shuttle or a short walk. The richly decorated rooms maintain a light, modern air more like a living room than a hotel. And the hotel provides a range of business services, including teleconferencing. Best of all is the cuisine at the Crescent Court's restaurant, Beau Nash. The blend of Italian nouvelle, Chinese, and American Southwest (could mesquite pizza be next?) found its way to our hearts with oo burn. Where else will you find rabbit ravioli in tomato garlic sauce? Bravo!

SPLENDOR IN THE STICKS

The security and serenity of conference centers outside big cities have lured many a meeting from convention hotels of late. One of the most alluring we've found is **Arrowwood of Westchester,** a pristine retreat on 114 wooded acres in Rye Brook, New York, just forty-five minutes from midtown Manhattan. In business terms, the work-study alcove in our room came complete with dictionary and thesaurus, plus a closed-circuit television for monitoring meetings we'd rather miss. The high-tech meeting rooms, however, could stimulate even a chairman of the bored. They were the most stunning we've seen.

But it was the Olympian pool (indoor-outdoor) the four tennis courts (two with protective bubbles), and the sylvan setting that tempted us to stay the weekend. You can book a Country Weekend for only $79.50 per person per night, including full breakfast or brunch and all games but golf (green fees extra). The best deal, though, is the Luxury Weekend Club, a twelve-month package good for any ten weekends, priced from $2,300 to $3,485 per couple, depending on meal plans. Call 800-633-6569.

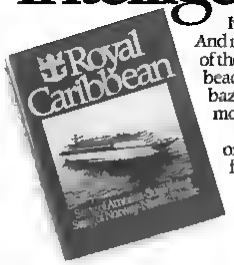
THE RED CARPET IN THE PINK ZONE

Just over a year ago, downtown Mexico City was decimated, and the famed Zona Rosa ("pink zone") popular with tourists for its shops, restaurants, and night life, was strewn with glass. Fortunately, the best-located hotel in the Zona—the **Westin Galeria Plaza**—suffered only plaster disaster: cracked walls that were quickly smoothed. Now things are back to normal, and we still see the Galeria Plaza as a special place for business travelers, especially those new to business in Mexico. Other hotels may have its amenities—telephones in bedroom and bath, color television with U.S. cable channels, twenty-four-hour room service, city views, secretarial service, and a rooftop pool—but only the Galeria Plaza has Tim Broughton. Head concierge Broughton, an Englishman as dapper as a royal butler (and as discreet as one, too), has been in Mexico for twenty-three years. He knows *everyone.* And he offers us "absolutely endless contacts" to guests, whether it be for government or private-sector business or to find a missing visitor. He may not be able to predict the next quake, but for anything else, just ask.

ITALY AT HOME

If Italy is off your list this year, put San Francisco on it. The four-star **Donatello,** a dream hotel made real by Italian-American Cal Rossi Jr., has brought the tastiest and most tasteful treats of Italy to the City by the Bay. Tucked just behind the massive Westin St. Francis Hotel, the more intimate ninety-five-room Donatello makes you feel you belong—in style. At the silk-and-marbled Ristorante Donatello, acclaimed for its northern-Italian delicacies, the homemade pastas and the bitter-chocolate spumoni are to diet for. But most novel is Club Donatello, a time-share deal in which corporate types can buy an upper-floor room for regular use including the privileges of a rooftop club and lavish fitness spa even when they're not staying in the property. "Ownership" means paying $17,500 for seven nights a year (any seven nights, singly or consecutively) in perpetuity. An electronic card key provides access to this private preserve. Hotel guests can peek by paying $8.50 for a fitness-center workout. The red-marbled-

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and-mirrored spa, with its turquoise water brightened by a pyramidal skylight, is worth the fee by itself.

To sample the Donatello's delights, their Two on the Town two-night package, not restricted to weekends, is the key. For $175 per person, double occupancy, you get a deluxe guest room, a bottle of champagne to welcome you, continental breakfasts and a dinner with wine at Ristorante Donatello, penthouse spa privileges, a bay cruise, and two tickets for *The San Francisco Experience* multimedia presentation, plus free parking (perhaps the best part of all). Call 800-227-3184, in California, 800-792-9837.

BARBECUE BUSINESS

Summer is behind us here but just ahead for Australia. To take advantage of the warm weather down under, the **Hilton International Melbourne** plans meetings in the sun. To gather poolside for shoptalk is an Aussie tradition and a popular one at this lovely hotel overlooking historic Fitzroy Gardens. The facilities at the 423-room Hilton make it possible to throw a shrimp on the barbie anytime you're in the mood, even during a business meeting. Just one hitch: it's up to you to keep an eye on the grill. At the Hilton International's outdoor conferences, you're the cook as well as the kingmaker. Considering the open-air courtyard bar nearby and the Australian penchant for beer, it can be a challenge to keep your mind on business and the barbecue, too. But if you keep your wits about you, neither you nor the shrimp should get burned.

SEE THE SOUND

The success of Vancouver's EXPO 86 has only increased the luster of Seattle, just to the south. This city on Puget Sound is currently undergoing a surge of sophistication (though not at the expense of its simpler pleasures). Sophisticated though it is, the hilltop **Sorrento Hotel**, built in 1908, is in sync with today's tastes, with its large rooms (seventy-six of them created from an original 150), its intimate, paneled Hunt Club dining room, its top-floor panoramic meeting room, and its prices—an easy $95 to $110 for truly deluxe digs (cotton sheets, goose-down pillows, bathroom phones, and art and antiques rare in hotel rooms).

Other Seattle discoveries, one new and one renewed. **Baffert's**, at 314 Broadway East, serves up one of the most intriguing menus we've seen (panbroiled catfish with Cajun pecan butter, roast quail with raspberry peppercorn sauce), and owner Bill Baffert is as much fun as his food, and the **Space Needle**, Seattle's landmark spire, has new management and lively new menus good for business or pleasure or both (its food reputation had plunged faster than its high-speed elevators do, but try it now).

On a day off, skip town to **Chateau Ste. Michelle**, the doyenne of Washington State's up-and-coming wineries, and a romantic escape from the city. The white wines command the most attention, winning various competitions much to the surprise of Californians. But the red Cabernet Sauvignon is now being noticed, too. If you can't take a Pacific salmon home, a bottle of Ste. Michelle will certainly do.

DOUBLETREE BRANCHES OUT

Peter Bidstrup is not your typical businessman. He's more like an elf—a tall elf who thinks work should be play. He also thinks you should get more than you pay for. That is obvious in his **Doubletree Hotels**, a chain of fifteen deluxe properties from Atlanta to Seattle. Now a new twist is coming on line at his **(Compri) Hotels**.

Doubletree owes its growing reputation as much to the personal service Bidstrup holds high as to the high style of its properties: quick response to requests, thanks to a high staff-guest ratio; guaranteed quick breakfasts, in your room or the restaurant (within five minutes or it's free); fresh-baked cookies at bedside (we'll take good old chocolate chips over gourmet mints anytime); and quick check-out plus friendly hellos and goodbyes by name. Call 800 528-0444.

(Compri)—the name is in parentheses to emphasize the all-inclusive nature of its French-inspired name—offers prestige at an affordable price. Image and status were what Bidstrup's research found mid-level business travelers wanting, and he created it with mid-priced (Compri), including the Compri Club, a private lounge area with large-screen TV, reading corner, daily cocktail hour to encourage mingling, a conference room, and a phone for free local calls. Oh, and a cooked-to-order breakfast, too. All included. Call 800-4-COMPRI.



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The State Department's **Citizens Emergency Center** can also help out by phone. The services start with official travel warnings on countries the government feels we should avoid, but they'll even attempt to locate overdue or missing travelers on request and act as liaison between families and travelers in trouble. Call 202-647-5225 from 8:15 A.M. to 10:00 P.M., eastern time, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. At other times call 202-634-3600 and ask the operator to connect you to the citizens emergency duty officer.

PAIN ON THE PLANE

A lot of people consider business travel a headache, but for migraine sufferers this is more than just a figure of speech. A long airplane trip can be the bane of a migraine man's day, but now the **National Migraine Foundation** says the headache-prone can take precautions and reduce business-travel stress. First, pack enough medication to last double the time you'll be away. Pack pills in separate pieces of luggage, should one get lost. Ask your doctor to write an extra prescription for you to take when traveling, and have him or her note the actual drug composition, your blood type, and your drug allergies on the slip. For more pain-relieving insight on your personal condition, call the National Migraine Foundation at 312-878-7715.

WHEN THE LEVEE BREAKS

A delicate subject, an indelicate condition: diarrhea. Yet for business travelers it can be the most debilitating dilemma a long trip can impose. Pepto Bismol may prevent it; Lomotil can stop it; yogurt, rice, bananas, and tea with lemon will help it subside. But the trick is to rehydrate the body without pouring in fluids that will only drain out again. Hail, **Gastrolyte.** This new, portable, and surprisingly potable product from USV Laboratories is the first nationally distributed antidiarrheal product in the U.S. that meets the standards recommended by the World Health Organization for oral rehydration. That means replacing lost fluids and electrolytes, the cause of weakness and malaise that accompany the condition. The biological details are on the box. We like what's in the box: convenient premeasured packets with a handy container for mixing with water.

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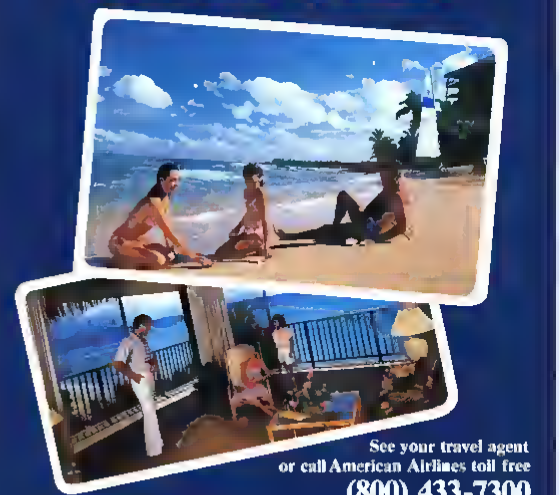
DAVID REED *and* JANE E. LASKY *are travel writers based in California*

FASHION CREDITS

Page T40: **A. J. McClone.** The Heartland Company *jacket* at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York. Alan's Apparel, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Mark Herman & Son, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Raleighs, Washington, D.C.; Marvells, Portland, Oregon. For information contact: The Heartland Company, 515 Madison Avenue, Suite 1020, New York, New York 10022. Ron Chereskin *shirt* at Bloomingdale's, New York; John Wanamaker, Philadelphia; Jacobson's, Winter Park, Florida; Grodins, San Lorenzo, California. *Page T41:* **Herb Wyatt.** Ideas from Massimo Osti by C.P. Company of Italy *jacket* at Barneys, New York. **Robert D'Ambruoso.** Boneville by Massimo Osti *jacket* at Peaches En Regalia, Aspen, Colorado. For information contact: G.F.T. USA Corporation, 650 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019. *Page T42,* **A. J. McClone.** Banana Republic *jacket* at Banana Republic, New York, Tampa, Florida, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Stamford, Connecticut, St. Louis, Missouri. For information contact: Banana Republic, Box 7737, San Francisco, California 94120. Or call 800-527-5200. British Khaki *shirt* at H. Gross & Co. Outfitters, Princeton, New Jersey; Macy's, Atlanta; Harrison & Co., Dallas. The Country Store of Concord, Newport, Rhode Island. C.A.M.P., Salt Lake City. For information contact: British Khaki, 214 West Thirty-ninth Street, New York, New York 10018 (Left of McClane) **Herb Wyatt.** Basco *jacket* at Barneys, New York; Macy's, Atlanta; Scully & Scully, Springfield, Illinois; Cavalletto, Minneapolis. For information contact: Basco, 58 West Fortieth Street, New York, New York 10018 (Below) **Herb Wyatt.** Henry Cottons suede *jacket* at Barneys, New York; Towne Square, Sayville, New York; Cuffs Clothing, Chagrin Falls, Ohio. *Page T43* (clockwise from top left). **Robert D'Ambruoso.** Polo by Ralph Lauren *jacket* and *shirt* at Polo/Ralph Lauren Shop, New York, Birmingham, Michigan. *Jacket* also at Polo/Ralph Lauren Shop, Atlanta and Chicago. For information contact: Polo Fashions, 40 West Fifty-fifth Street, New York, New York 10019. Jeffrey Banks *sweater* at Bloomingdale's, New York; McClures, Nashville, Tennessee. For information contact: Jeffrey Banks, 1384 Broadway, New York, New York 10018. **Robert D'Ambruoso.** Trekka *parka* at Bloomingdale's, New York; Louis, Boston; Wooll Brothers, Kansas City, Missouri; Hudson's, Minneapolis. For information contact: Trekka, 3 East Fifty-third Street, New York, New York 10022. Robert Comstock *sweater* at Camouflage, New York; Gidding Jenny, Cincinnati; Louis, Boston; Macy's, California. *Page T44,* **Herb Wyatt.** Alexander Julian *sweater* at Saks Fifth Avenue, New York; The Alexander Julian Shop, Dallas; Ron Koss, Tarzana, California; Perkins Shearer, Denver. For information contact: Alexander Julian, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York, New York 10018. Pendleton *shirt* at B. Altman, New York; The Jones Store, Kansas City, Kansas; Macy's, San Francisco. *Page T45* (at left) **A. J. McClone.** Robert Stock *sweater* and *shirt* at Macy's, New York and California; Hormes, Pittsburgh; Nordstrom, Seattle. For information contact: Robert Stock, 6 West Fifty-seventh Street, New York, New York 10019. **Robert D'Ambruoso.** Henry Cottons *sweater* at The Towne Squire, Great Neck and Southampton, New York; Dimensions, Philadelphia; Bugsby and Kruthers, Chicago; Alexander Beegle, Virginia; J. & R. Pollack, West Hartford, Connecticut. For information contact: Zanella Ltd., 581 Fifth Avenue, Sixth floor, New York, New York 10022. *Page T46* (from left). **Herb Wyatt.** Perry Ellis *sport jacket* at Bloomingdale's, New York; Goldberg Jenny, Cincinnati; Neiman-Marcus, Dallas; Perry Ellis *shirt* at Bloomingdale's, New York; Bullock's, Los Angeles. For information contact: Perry Ellis Men, 575 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10018 (At center) **A. J. McClone.** Alexander Julian *sport jacket* at The Alexander Julian Shop, Dallas; Perkins Shearer, Denver; Shaia's of Homewood, Birmingham, Alabama. Alexander Julian *cardigan* at The Alexander Julian Shop, Dallas; Marshall Field's, Chicago; Bullock's, Los Angeles. Alexander Julian *shirt* at The Alexander Julian Shop, Dallas; Marshall Field, Chicago; Bullocks, Los Angeles. For information contact: Alexander Julian, 8 West Fortieth Street, New York, New York 10018. **Robert D'Ambruoso.** Jeffrey Banks *sweater* and *shirt* at Bergdorf Goodman, New York; Macy's, San Francisco. Shirt also at L.S. Ayres & Co., Indianapolis, Indiana. For information contact: Jeffrey Banks, 1384 Broadway, New York, New York 10018.

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BRIDGE WITH THE PAST



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Below the Brooklyn Bridge, tugs churn the East River. Directly underfoot, cars rumble to and from Brooklyn, and the exposed beams and bolts of the pedestrian trestle vibrate against your fingertips at the frequency of lower Manhattan. The Brooklyn Bridge is one of the few monuments that you look through—through the tower arches shaped like bishops' miters, and the web-of-steel cables that lend a spider's point of view to the Wall Street skyscrapers. You could take a nice picture here. The bridge has composed the city for you

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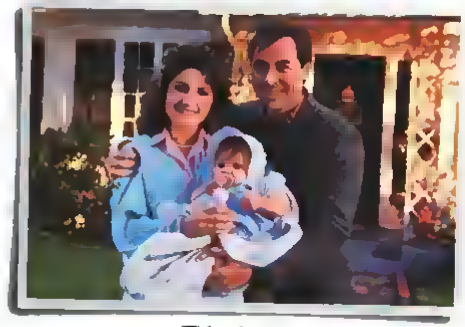
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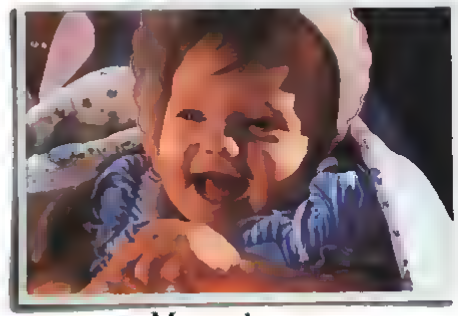
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ESSAY

White Widows

by Gay Talese

They were women left behind by their village husbands, men who sought work and fortune in America. They were widows with no one to mourn, whose aloneness brought them a new independence



My mother had a cousin in Brooklyn who was a member of the Mafia, or so I always assumed because, though he never held a job, he invariably arrived at the Brooklyn home of my mother's parents for holiday dinners driving a big new car and wearing silk suits and shirts adorned with diamond cuff links and stickpins—and tilted forward on his head was a black bulletproof hat, a bowler, that was lined with steel.

I *knew* it was lined with steel because one weekend, after I had accompanied my mother and father to a large wedding reception in Brooklyn and was sitting on the edge of the dance floor near this cousin, he accidentally dropped his hat on my left foot while attempting to doff it toward the applauding crowd after being introduced by the bandleader—and my toe was swollen with pain for several days.

When I questioned my mother about him she explained that he was only a "distant" cousin who habitually visited her parents uninvited, and she added that since her marriage to my father—and her resettlement

GAY TALESE is a contributing editor of Esquire. This is the third in a series of pieces that began in our August issue

in Ocean City, New Jersey—she was relieved and pleased to be dwelling 130 miles away from her Brooklyn cousin's unwelcome appearances.

Then on a very hot day in late August 1941, as I was roller-skating near my parents' dress shop on the main street of Ocean City, I saw cruising slowly along the avenue, in search of a parking space, a large black automobile driven by a man wearing a dark jacket and a rounded black hat. The jaunty men of Ocean City wore straw hats on sunny days, and their suits usually were made of white flannel or beige linen, and since the vacationers at this summer resort were almost exclusively from Philadelphia or elsewhere in Pennsylvania, it was most uncommon to see an out-of-state automobile license plate, as I just had, bearing the stencil of New York.

Having little doubt about the driver's identity, I skated as quickly as I could toward my parents' store, then toe-hopped across the showroom rug with clattering awkwardness, past the disapproving glances of the saleswomen, and impatiently waited to speak with my mother, who was then preoccupied with a customer. My mother had told me that I should *never* interrupt her when she was busy with a customer, and so now I watched quietly as she removed a dress from a hanger and handed it to a girdled, buxom woman who stood peeking through the half-opened door of a fitting room.

It was the final day of the big summer sale, and the racks still contained much unsold merchandise that my mother was eager to replace with the autumn stock, which was already uncrated but unpaid for, in the annex. It had been a slow season at the seashore, where the local economy was still in a slump from the paucity of vacation dollars caused by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Earlier, on the avenue, I had seen my father walking toward the bank, where I knew, from his breakfast conversation with my mother, that he was hoping to improve the terms of an unfavorable loan. He had still not returned to the store when I stood waiting to forewarn my mother about her cousin. But before I could speak with her, I saw her cousin standing in front of the store window, a portly, black-hatted figure silhouetted in the sunlight, his eyes looking up at the sign above the door to confirm that he had arrived at his desired location.

Before he could get a glimpse of me, I skated into one of the empty fitting rooms and watched from behind a curtain, as curious as I was frightened. He walked slowly through the crowd along the counters and clothes racks back toward my mother, his broad face forming a smile, his hat clutched firmly in one hand while his other hand (extending beyond a gleaming cuff link) reached out toward my mother in anticipation of a warm embrace.

When my mother saw him, she smiled with none of the enthusiasm she bestowed upon her customers. Although she offered her cheek for a light kiss, she quickly took his arm and guided him toward the far side of the showroom, away from the shoppers and saleswomen, and near the fitting room whose curtain I had behind, fidgeting on motionless roller skates.

"Cousin Catherine," I heard him say, "I was in the area on business, and since I was so close, I thought I'd drop by and spend the weekend with you, and maybe get a little sun."

Immediately my mother shook her head.

"I am sorry," she said, "but I cannot have houseguests at this time of year."

Seeming stunned by her response, his smiling face was suddenly transformed and with a frown and raised eyebrow he said solemnly: "Catherine, I'm your cousin."

Unaffected, my mother raised her right hand and, with a pointed finger, directed his attention to the rows of unsold dresses extending the length of the store.

"In summertime," she said, "only *these* are my cousins."

Much as he tried to convince her to change her mind, my mother refused to accommodate him, and before my father had returned to the store, her cousin was gone.

I remained in the fitting room, not yet ready to abandon my place of concealment, and sitting carefully on the cushioned bench, I began with some difficulty to free my feet from the metal skates that were tightly clamped to the soles of my Buster Brown shoes. While I twisted and jiggled the warped skate key, I noticed that my father had arrived and my mother had now gone forward to speak with him, and although I was too far away to hear what was being said, I could tell from the expression on my father's face that he was not happy with what my mother was telling him.

A serious man by nature, he stood looking almost mournfully at the floor, his head nodding slowly as my mother spoke, his arms folded tightly across the front of his chest in a way that bunched up the material of the new gabardine jacket he had recently designed and tailored for himself—a jacket with narrow, sharply cut, high-pointed lapels that now seemed to rise slightly like the ears of an alerted rabbit. My mother had been inhospitable to a *mafioso*, a cousin no less—a serious social insult that in my father's native village of Maida, in southern Italy, might well have induced a *vendetta*.

But as I watched my mother, there was no indication that she shared my father's concern. She was *American*-born, after all, even though her parents in Brooklyn had come from the same part of Italy as my father, she had somehow separated herself from their old customs and fears—had created with her modish clothes and detached manner the modern woman that she ap-



ILLUSTRATION: DOUGLAS FRASER

The white widows personified an evolving matriarchy, a sorority composed of strong-willed individuals

peared to be on this day, standing firmly in her high-heeled white shoes, seeming as cool and unruffled as the slender window mannequins that she stylishly dressed and that she resembled. If she were concerned about anything after disposing of her cousin, it was probably that the transactions on this final day of the summer sale had not yet met her highest expectations.

My mother was betrothed to the dress business. As a young girl growing up in Brooklyn, she had outfitted her dolls with a varied wardrobe that she changed with the seasons, and she never permitted these pampered idols to be played with, or even touched, by any of her four sisters—my aunts, who, in recalling this fact to me years later, conveyed the suggestion of a slight, yet everlasting sense of resentment toward the unsharing, aloof little girl that my mother perhaps once was.

After high school she sold dresses in a large department store in Brooklyn, where she later became the assistant buyer, I think that, had she not met my father,

> Angelina married Russo and resigned herself, with prayers and perseverance, to the burden of being his wife.

she would have been content to remain in that store for the rest of her working life. It provided my mother, who might otherwise have been restricted by the insularity of her Italian neighborhood and the prosaic expectations of her parents, with a passport to a larger America, to the grand bazaar of business and new ideas, of wishful thinking and whimsy, of temptation in a variety of colors, shapes, and sizes. Here she learned about marketing and money and befriended fellow employees whose backgrounds and life-styles were different from her own—she often had lunch with the decorator and his boyfriend—and here she also studied the manners and moods of inveterate browsers and frugal consumers, impulse buyers and lavish spenders, bargain hunters and kleptomaniacs.

The store was a substitute for the travel opportunities and college education she lacked; within its gilded and spacious multistoried interior, she felt like a princess in a castle aglow with crystal chandeliers, surrounded by freshly cut flowers and serenaded by music. It contained countless gowns and robes and negligees and cocktail dresses and elegant gift boxes and also glass jewelry counters, which each day reflected the faces of promenading customers united in their avidity for what was desirable, enhancing, and fashionably contemporary.

But when she returned home in the early evening, wearing the colorful frocks that she had obtained from the store on her employee's discount, she readjusted to the cloistered ambience of her family's home, where the walls were hung with crucifixes and holy pictures, and where her parents were usually dressed in black. Before their marriage to each other, both of her parents had experienced tragic marriages during their younger years, and their early habit of wearing the color of mourning had outlasted the pain they had felt for those once mourned.

The first husband of my mother's mother, Angelina, died of malaria in the Italian village of Maida during the early months of the marriage, and Angelina was left childless at nineteen and uncourted for three years—until she received in the mail a snapshot from Brooklyn of a willing widower who was a friend of her American immigrant uncle and his enterprising son, not yet distinguished for wearing black steel-lined bowlers.

Although the widower in the photograph appeared to be somewhat severe and at least ten years her senior, Angelina's matchmaking relatives in America favorably described him as an energetic man who would be a most able provider. He worked for a real estate tycoon as a coachman and personal attendant in lower Manhattan and Brooklyn, and because of his reddish moustache and full head of red hair, he was known to all as Russo.

So Angelina agreed to leave Maida and visit her relatives in Brooklyn for two months in order to become acquainted with Russo. During that time Russo came to dinner every Sunday night, sometimes bringing flowers, rarely saying very much, but often suggesting impatience by his mood or manner.

If dinner was late he would remove his gold watch on a chain from his black vest pocket and look at it, and five minutes later he would look at it again. His coachman's compulsion for punctuality was matched by his coachman's manner of sitting rigidly and straight-spined in his chair and holding his utensils firmly and upright, as if gripping the reins of a team of ill-tempered horses, and there was always in his expression a sense of intensity, the narrow-eyed look of a man who was accustomed to traveling into the wind, the fog, the rain, the sleet, and endless unseen but clearly imagined adversities.

Yet there was a redeeming stubbornness and strength about this man that Angelina found comforting, and it was also true that gentility, sensitivity, and a flair for romance were not quintessential requisites among Italian courting couples in America at the turn of the century. Life to them was a very practical matter—and it certainly was to this widow and widower who were getting no younger in Brooklyn in 1902. Angelina wanted children. Russo wanted a wife. Her relatives wanted relief from the responsibility of finding her a husband. And so it was done. Angelina married Russo, and thus began a lengthy relationship during which Angelina resigned herself, with the help of prayers and her own perseverance, to the burden of being Russo's wife.

He indeed proved to be a man of severity—the very quality that Angelina had perceived in him after first seeing his image in the photograph sent to her in Maida. And while he always maintained a formal air of courtesy toward her, she began to worry after the birth of their first child that his harshness, his temper that matched the fiery color of his hair, would sooner or later cost him his job—especially after she overheard him one morning screaming insults in the street at the stout, monocled Prussian real estate magnate who was his boss.

Much to her relief, however, the Prussian responded only by shrugging his shoulders and shaking his head slowly while he meekly climbed into the carriage. Then, after Russo had hoisted himself vigorously up onto his seat and pulled his top hat down hard on his head, the carriage bolted forward jerkily as he cracked the horses' hides twice with his whip.

With Russo's continued employment came a second child, then a third, and then three more in the next decade—a total of five daughters and one son, none of whom bore any physical resemblance to the others. The first child was an emerald-eyed brunette with olive complexion. The next was a florid-toned, brown-eyed redhead. The third, my mother, had auburn hair, very dark eyes, and fair skin. The fourth child was a tall, freckle-faced boy with light chestnut hair. The fifth was a plumpish, rosy-cheeked blonde who resembled a Wagnerian soprano. The sixth was a lissome, sallow-skinned girl with nut-brown hair and almond-shaped Eastern eyes who required only a silken veil and a snake to charm a sultan.

It was as if the genes and bloodlines of Russo and Angelina had been interfused with the hybrid history of those southern Italians who for centuries had been invaded, conquered, reconquered, and partly absorbed by competing Greeks and Romans, Goths and Saracens, Normans and Franks, by the fleeing Albanians and their pursuing Turks, by the Waldensian heretics and their papist inquisitors, by the Jacobin sympathizers and their cutthroat assailants led by the brigand-rostered army of Cardinal Fabrizio Ruffo, by the Spanish Bourbon musketeers who



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were driven through southern Italy into Sicily by Napoleon's rampaging cavalry, itself harassed by Lord Nelson's gunboats, which controlled the Mediterranean and soon landed British troops on the besieged beach front of Maida itself.

As the eyes of Angelina's offspring reflected the assorted tints and tones of a Byzantine mosaic, so did her children's differing personalities and conduct represent the heterogeneity of southern Italy.

Angelina's first daughter was a born domestic who clung to her mother's apron strings as a child and remained close to Angelina until the latter's death forty years later—at which time the devoted, aging daughter, having recently been married for the first time (to a widower), was too old to bear children of her own.

The red-haired second daughter grew up as a rebel and agnostic who defied her father's will in accepting a nighttime job as a telephone operator (Russo claimed that most of the Brooklyn operators moonlighted as prostitutes), then defied him again by dating a politicized factory worker who subscribed to Communist periodicals and who played trombone on weekends in Broadway orchestras; finally she became an art student who carefully studied, and tried to improve upon, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

> Russo emerged as a wounded man, a fugitive from some dark center in his soul, a helpless misanthrope and erstwhile orphan.

The next child, my mother, was the family escapist and fantasist, who covered her bedroom walls with film posters of young Lillian Gish, and invariably kept her door closed to avoid contact with her family and their guests; when she was not sewing dresses for her dolls or modeling her own clothes in front of the mirror, she sat rocking slowly in her white wicker chair, listening to her music box, and imagining that she was somewhere else.

Her brother, the fourth child in the family, became a Golden Gloves boxer before graduating from high school—a sport into which he drifted prematurely after being banished from class for hitting a teacher who had called him a "dago." When not in the boxing ring, he was employed by his father's boss, the Prussian, as an attendant in a large garage in which were parked several delivery trucks, and also a black automobile owned by the cousin who wore the steel-lined bowler. Russo also worked there. One day, on instructions from the boss, Russo told his son to drive a laundry truck to a certain Brooklyn pier, where men would be waiting to unload the truck's contents. After arriving at the pier, the young man noticed that concealed under stacks of tablecloths and bed linen were several cases of whiskey, which were surreptitiously loaded into an awaiting motorboat.

The fifth child in the family, the Teutonic-looking blonde, was the resident glutton and practical joker, a young woman of earthy humor and an indulgent nature. She smoked, she drank; she generously colored her face with rouge and lipstick; and on weekends, when she helped her eldest sister and mother with the grocery shopping, she served as the kitchen's pasta taster and tester before the food was placed on the table for the big Sunday dinner.

Angelina's final daughter, as the baby of the family, grew up accustomed to being pampered and adored, was spared most domestic chores, and ventured through life with a blithesome disposition. A flapper during the 1920s and always a bit of a coquette, she was the most attractive of Angelina's daughters, the best dancer by far, the most sought-after by men, the most socially liberated and politically liberal. After divorcing her husband, she befriended a man who was black.

If Angelina and Russo's six children had anything in common, it was probably an enduring affection for their mother and a disaffection for their father, a man whose support of them was primarily financial (and even that proffered in a begrudging manner) and who preferred taking his evening meals alone in the kitchen, served by his wife *precisely* at 7:00, and without any commotion or conversation coming from the children with whom he never learned to communicate.

Part of his problem was language itself. Russo insisted on speaking his brand of southern-Italian dialect in the home, a dialect that his children never fully understood, or wanted to understand, for in their ignorance of his words they more easily avoided the responsibility of dealing with him directly. What was clearly needed in this family was someone to serve as an interpreter between the children and their parents, and also to translate for Russo certain business letters or documents that, because written in formalized English, were beyond his comprehension.

Since Russo would not trust an outsider to perform this function, and since none of his children would voluntarily do it, he ordered my more obedient mother one day to assume the role of his unpaid interpreter and intermediary with the English-speaking world. She had learned to speak and write English perfectly in primary school, and now, after returning home each afternoon from high school, she would be tutored in Italian by a white-bearded language professor who had been born in Maida but lived in the neighborhood.

Within a year, my mother spoke and read Italian with sufficient competence to clarify all the interfamily problems of communication, if not to solve the problems themselves. One interesting result of this experience for my mother, however, was that in becoming her father's domestic secretary and confidante, in dealing with him each day in his own dialect, she began for the first time to understand this contentious and estranged individual. From her perusal of his old letters, foreign documents, and mementos—and from what he occasionally told her during uncharacteristically candid moments when he lowered his guard—he emerged as a wounded, vulnerable man who was much more of an escapist than she: he was a fugitive from some dark center in his soul, a helpless misanthrope and erstwhile orphan who had fled the austere foundling home into which he had been placed by vaguely remembered relatives who never reunited themselves with him.

As a teenager he joined a boatload of illegal aliens to be employed as a laborer's apprentice in Brazil, but he loathed the life in South America and returned to Italy two years later with enough savings to purchase two horses and begin working alternately as a teamster and carriage driver. The economy of Italy was then at a starvation level, however, and most of his passengers in the 1880s were men abandoning the dry soil and horizonless hills, bearing heavy valises made of wood, they were en route to the rail terminal to await the Naples-bound train that would take them to the transatlantic ships headed for the promised land of the United States.

In the town square of Maida, as in villages throughout the peninsula, there were billboards declaring that good jobs awaited healthy, hardworking men in America. The signs added that steamship tickets would be paid in advance by American employers who would later be recompensed by deductions drawn from the workers' salaries.

And so from the hill towns and fishing villages of Italy, young men planned their departures, and Russo carried many of them in his horse-drawn wagon along the dusty roads away from aging parents and newly wed brides and small children who waved until the wagon faded from view. Russo heard their final words, saw their tears, observed their embraces and kisses, but, as a stranger to intimacy, he had no idea how they truly felt during these parting moments. He only knew that when he returned to the village, life somehow seemed to be changing.

There was one change in particular that he watched with mixed pleasure each Sun-



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day in the town square. The square had always been a male preserve, a place of leisure where the village men gathered (while their wives attended mass or were occupied at home) to drink liquored coffee and argue over local politics, or to stroll around the parameters of the square, arm in arm, showing off their best suits, and smoking cigarettes or small cigars as they talked business or exchanged bawdy jokes or casually admitted things to one another that women would confess most reluctantly to a priest.

This procession around the square was called the *passeggiata*. And although it was located in the village's most public place, it was nonetheless a private roost for men. Except now, as Russo was becoming aware, a certain number of younger women were flouting the once-accepted exclusion of females and, without invitation or explanation, were joining the path of the *passeggiata*.

Like the men, these women walked arm in arm and spoke animatedly among themselves. While they kept their distance from the male couples who walked in front or behind, and avoided making eye contact, they were in no way deferential, nor did they seem to be intimidated by the other men who sat almost leering in the cafés, saying nothing but sometimes making sibilant sounds as they forcefully exhaled the cigarette smoke through their teeth.

The white widows were in no way deferential, nor did they seem to be intimidated by the leering men in the cafés.

This new development in the square did not, of course, escape the insatiable curiosity of the village's more traditional women—including those elderly, dark-clad ladies who missed nothing even while they sat outside their houses facing the wall, adhering to the discreet style of the ancient Greek and Arab women who once basked in this same sunlight. Nor did it go unnoticed by the village's nubile young virgins who, wearing white linen blouses and festive skirts, stood on the balconies overlooking the *passeggiata* as they arranged flowers and furtively exchanged quick glances with the unmarried men of their age who gathered around the fountain on Sundays, singing songs and playing guitars.

Without prompting open comment, or commenting openly themselves, these newcomers to the *passeggiata* were representative of something novel in the village; even their manner of walking was different. They walked more slowly than the other women, more casually, less purposefully, less duty-bound. These women in the square obviously had time on their hands and often smiles on their faces as they chatted with one another; they exuded a sense of independence that, while not meant to be displeasing to the men who watched them, nonetheless conveyed the impression that they were not primarily interested in pleasing them.

These women were other men's women—they were the wives of the ambitious young men who had left the village to make money in America. They were therefore women who were worthy of respect and in church on Sundays they were often seen lighting candles at the altar and presumably praying for the safe and hasty return of their spouses, who were sometimes known to remain away from the village for two years or even longer. Yet very few of these women who were long deprived of their husbands appeared to be suffering from grief or depression. While they may occasionally have felt in private some kinship to widowhood, in public they radiated gaiety and confidence, and they often dressed in the same light colors of the hopeful village maidens. Which was why they were called white widows.

There was, to be sure, a certain amount of gossip about them, and all that it took to activate the village's most tireless tale-bearing tongues was for one of the white widows to be observed in church not receiving the holy sacrament with the regularity of the other female communicants. Envy, of course, circulated as freely as the ever-present flies through the pews and the high-vaulted sanctified interior, and even the most secure of traditional women felt at times threatened by these relatively free, semi-married signoras who, thanks to the profitable efforts of their husbands overseas, had more money to spend on themselves and their children than did the wives of the local men who had chosen to remain on the farms or to struggle as vendors or artisans.

Still, the money sent to the white widows from America was bolstering the local economy: the widows were spending it at the food market, investing it in farm improvements, and sharing it with their parents or in-laws or other relatives in whose homes they often dwelled, providing the primary means of support. Such a position of economic power had never before been held by women of ordinary families, and with this new power the white widows personified an evolving matriarchy, a sorority of sorts composed of strong-willed individuals who would assume in their husbands' absence full responsibility for the rearing of children and the managing of matters of proprietary interest. They also decided how they would spend the idle hours of the day and perhaps part of the night.

During this period there was considerable marital stress because a majority of Italy's pioneering migratory workers were not yet able or willing to transfer their families to America. Despite the money earned there, the workmen during the 1880s and 1890s usually lived in teeming boardinghouses, or in railway boxcars, or in the grim barracks of cold and remote company towns where, instead of rising each morning to such soothing Maida sounds as the ringing of church bells or the crowing of roosters, they were aroused at dawn by harsh, rasping factory whistles that summoned them into coal mines, steelyards, stone quarries, or the gravel pits from which they emerged exhausted at twilight, covered with dust and dirt and sweat, and imbued with a foul temper.

So most of these men wisely kept their wives and children in the familiar surroundings of the village, convinced that the sunny poverty of Italy was much more habitable and healthy than the polluted prosperity of America. While the men were often made aware through letters of their wives' excruciating loneliness and feelings of abandonment, they also assumed the women knew that these years of separation would cease as soon as enough money had been earned and saved to achieve economic solvency in southern Italy. Most of the men sent expressions of affection and reassurance through the mail, along with money, American-made dresses and shoes, and toys for the children. Sometimes, on impulse, the men themselves sailed across the sea, arriving at the Maida station to pay a surprise visit to their families on the occasion of a wedding anniversary, or a birthday, or to attend the annual festival of Saint Francis di Paola, which throughout southern Italy was regarded as a joyful day of spiritual solidarity.

My grandfather, Russo, was often the first person to greet these arriving men at the station, and during the forty-minute ride uphill in his wagon laden with luggage and parcels containing gifts, he would inform the men of the latest local happenings and hear their tales of overseas adventures and experience vicariously their pleasure in returning home.

One morning at the terminal, however, Russo was approached by a man who stepped off the train without carrying luggage. Seeming sullen and impatient, he asked that Russo immediately transport him to the inn located at the crossroads near the Norman wall that bordered the western edge of Maida. Russo had never before seen this man, who was neatly dressed in what Russo assumed to be an American-made suit, while the man said little during the ride, he did confide that a

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recent family quarrel had forced his return to Italy. But, he added, he was sure that he could solve the problem within a day's time, and he asked that Russo pick him up at the crossroads on the following morning so that he could board the noon train back to Naples.

Russo was there the next day, as requested, and during the ride back to the station the man sat quietly on the upper bench, gazing pensively at the countryside and at times touching his eyes with his fingers as if wiping away tears.

Upon arrival at the terminal Russo received his payment, and, after nodding in thanks, he watched the man board the dust-covered train that slowly edged forward to the sound of hissing steam and the clanging of bells. Russo then returned to the village, where later that evening he was approached by the police and questioned about the man he had taken to the train.

Two people in Maida had been fatally shot with pistol bullets during the night, the police told Russo. One was a woman

> Russo's grief and pain became a poison that was to circulate within his system for the rest of his life.

who had been married to a worker in America. The other victim was a man who resided in Maida and was presumed to be her lover. Russo told the police the little that he knew, and the desk clerk at the inn could add nothing of significance because the man had entered the inn only for a drink at the bar, then had left without registering to spend the night.

The police did not seem to be irritated or disappointed by this insufficient information, nor did they say that they planned to continue their investigation. It was, after all, a crime of familial passion that was hardly uncommon in southern Italy, where there had long existed a tradition of understanding, if not respect, for a cuckold who sought revenge by killing his wife—in this case, the white widow—and her illicit lover. So the police released Russo and the desk clerk from further questioning, and soon the case was closed without great inconvenience to anyone except the couple who had perhaps once been in love.

Russo himself was in love at this time—not with one of the public ladies who paraded in the *passeggiata*, but with a modest and petite young woman whom he had often seen as she sat on her balcony and whom he had recently been honored to escort home from church in his carriage.

Her name was Rosaria. Her father, whom Russo knew slightly, was an elderly, gimp-gaited widower who had been injured decades earlier while serving as a soldier in the army of General Giuseppe Garibaldi, the hero whose triumphs during the 1860 revolution had finally unified the peninsula and liberated southern Italy from more than a century of severe rule under the Spanish Bourbon kings.

Rosaria's father was now inebriated much of the time, and except for his soldier's pension that he irregularly received, he relied for his livelihood on the money his only daughter earned as a housekeeper in a deteriorating palazzo owned by one of Maida's last noble families.

The speed with which her father accepted Russo's marriage proposal both surprised and piqued Rosaria, who might well have wondered if her father had been influenced by the fancied convenience of having a carriage owning chauffeur for a son-in-law. But she herself welcomed the opportunity to quit her job at the palazzo. Working as an outside housekeeper in southern Italy was deemed to be a degrading occupation for a young woman—the assumption being that a housekeeper was sometimes expected to provide, and was sometimes agreeable to providing, sexual favors in secret to the head of the household or perhaps to one of his sons.

In Rosaria's case, such intimacies had indeed occurred between herself and the baron's second son. But later, as her feelings of guilt increased along with her concern that a public scandal would nullify her chances of marriage to an eligible suitor of her class, she became more amenable than she otherwise would have been to her father's urgings that she marry Russo.

Rosaria married Russo in the winter of 1884. Within a year she gave birth to a son, and two years later had a second son, both of whom had Russo's red hair. Russo was happy with his life, but in the years ahead it seemed impossible with his earnings as a carriage driver to adequately support his household, which included not only his wife and sons but also his father-in-law.

While complaining of his financial difficulties one day to a friend visiting Maida from America—a man who worked as a construction foreman for a wealthy Prussian realtor in New York—Russo was told that the realtor was expanding his business and would soon be needing additional help. Russo's friend volunteered to speak to the boss about arranging Russo's passage. Months later, Russo received a job offer from New York, and after promising to send for his family as soon as he could manage it, he sailed to America. He spent the next year working first as a laborer in his friend's construction gang and then as the boss's carriage driver and the superintendent of a large building that his employer owned on Hester Street in lower Manhattan.

A spacious, empty apartment in this building was made available to Russo, who quickly sent word to his wife to prepare the family for the move to America. But her response to his letter was unenthusiastic, and she continued in polite but evasive ways to delay the departure from Italy for more than a year. Her excuses were attributed at times to the illness of her father or to the fact that her sons were yet too young for the trip, or she complained of various household complications or her own mild but endless ailments. The date of the passage seemed to fade further and further away.

And then one day in New York, Russo heard from a friend who had just returned from visiting Maida that his wife was having an affair with the baron's son. It was more than an affair, the man quickly corrected himself, for she was now pregnant with this other man's child.

Russo was overwhelmed by astonishment and grief. For days he could barely eat or speak; he could hardly believe what he had been told. It was a betrayal so insulting that, rather than inspiring him to a violent revenge, he internalized his pain so that it soon became a poison that was to circulate within his system for the rest of his life. It not only poisoned his memory of his wife but it destroyed as well his affection for his sons. His wife and sons became dead to him, destroyed, gone forever from his life, and in private he disowned them, vowing never again to see them—or desire to see them—even if they came crawling to his door. They were as dead to him as they would have been had he taken a gun and shot them himself.

From that time on, in Brooklyn, Russo wore the dark clothes of mourning, bearing in private this anguish and bitterness through his second marriage to my grandmother Angelina and the birth of his six American children.

When my mother told me this story years later, she left little doubt in my mind as to why she was able to leave this man's home as soon as she could find someone to whom she could give her love unreservedly. She married my father and left Brooklyn to occupy a small white house on the Jersey shore near the boardwalk where it was the custom for American women to walk in the brightly colored dresses of their choice, with the men of their choice. She left the long shadows that were cast on Brooklyn sidewalks for a place where she would remain forever distant from the conspicuous mourning of her father for a white widow, and the unwelcome visits of a cousin who wore a steel-lined black hat. ●



Heart Songs

by E. Annie Proulx



ILLUSTRATION BY JINDRA WILSON

Snipe drove along through a ravine of mournful hemlocks, gravel snapping against the underside of the Peugeot. He had been driving for an hour, past trailers and shacks on the back roads, the yards littered with country junk—rusty oil drums, collapsed stacks of rotten boards, plastic toys smeared with mud, worn tires cut into petal shapes and filled with weeds. He slowed to look at these proofs of poor lives the same way other drivers gaped at accidents on the highway, the same way he had once, years before, looked out a train window into a lighted room where someone sprawled naked on a mattress, a hand reaching for the cheap bottle.

He sucked at his thin lower lip, watching for the turn to the left. He was bony, with a high-colored face and bloodshot, dim, gooseberry eyes set in shallow sockets. His pale reddish hair receded in front, grew long behind his ears, as though his scalp had slipped back a little each year. Women were sometimes pulled to him despite the stooped shoulders and the way his nervous, bitten fingers picked at his face or tapped against each other's tips in fretful rhythms, despite his aimless, random thrusts at life. A sense of dangerous heat came from him, the heat of some interior decay smoldering like a lightning-struck tree heart, a smothered misery that might someday flare and burn.

Annie Proulx's work is as real as a pickup truck, as ominous as a fairy tale. She knows about men and women and woods and animals and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to. She writes sensuously about the country, but she is not a "nature" writer. She catches the frightening undertow of the backwoods and its people, but she does not romanticize or judge or stoop to sensation. She ignores fashion in favor of a true voice and vision. She haunts. —*Mary Lee Settle*

E. Annie Proulx *lives in rural Vermont. A collection of her short stories,* Heart Songs, *will be published next year by Scribners.*



Two years before, he had left his former life, left his wife for Catherine, the city for the country, the clothing shop that his wife now successfully ran alone for sleazy jobs in unfamiliar places. He'd quit the last three weeks ago, sick of dipping old furniture into a tank of stinking paint remover. Now he had the fine idea to play his guitar in rural night spots, cinder-block buildings on the outskirts of town filled with Saturday night beer drunks and bad music. He wanted to hook his heel on the chrome rung of a barstool, hear the rough talk, and leave with the last stragglers in the morning's small hours. He recognized in himself a secret wish to step off into some abyss of bad taste and moral sloth, and Chopping County seemed as good a place as any to find it.

He came out of the hemlocks into brushy, tangled land and missed the narrow track hidden in weeds at the left. He had to back up to make the turn at the rusted mailbox leaning out of the cheatgrass like a lonesome dog yearning for a pat on the head. The guitar sounded in its case as Catherine's car strained up the grade, alder and willow whipping the cream-colored finish. The potholes deepened into washouts and shifting heaps of round, tan stones. He passed an old pickup truck abandoned in a ditch, its windshield starred with bullet holes, thick burdocks thrusting up through the floor. Snipe felt a dirty excitement, as though he were looking through the train window again. When the Peugeot stalled on the steep grade he left it standing in the track, though it meant he would have to back down the hill in the dark.

He felt the gravel through the thin soles of his worn snakeskin boots, the guitar bumped against his leg, sounded a muffled chord. A quarter of a mile on, he stopped and again took out the creased letter.

Dear Sir, I seen your ad you wanted to play with a Group. I got a Group mostly my family we play contry music. We play Wednites 7 pm if you want to come by.

Eno Twilight

A map, drawn with thick pencil lines, showed only one left turn off the gravel road. He folded it along the original creases and put it back in his shirt pocket so it lay flat and smooth. He'd come this far, he might as well go all the way.

The grade leveled off and cornfields opened up on each side of the track. A mountaintop farm. Godawful place to live, thought Snipe, panting and grinning. He could smell cow manure and hot green growth. Pale dust sprayed up at every step. He felt it in his teeth, and when his fingers picked at his face fine motes whirled in the thick orange light of the setting sun. A hard, glinting line of metal roof showed beyond the cornfield, and far away a wood thrush hurled cold glissandos into the stillness.

The house was old and broken, the splintery gray clapboards hanging loosely on the post-and-beam frame, the wavery glass in the windows mended with tape and cardboard. A hand-painted sign over the door said GOD FORGIVES. He could see a child's face in a window, see fleering mouth and squinting eyes before it turned away. *Arook arook* came a ferocious baying and barking from the dogs chained to narrow lean-tos beside the house. They stood straining at the edges of their dirt circles and clamored at his strangeness. Snipe stood on the broken millstone that served as a doorstep, his heart beating and beating. Threads of corn silk lay on the granite. He was let into the stifling kitchen by the child whose uncontrolled face he had seen.

The stamped tin ceiling was stained dark with smoke, a big table pushed against the wall to make more room. Above it hung a fly-specked calendar showing a moose fighting off wolves under a full moon. The Twilights sat silently on kitchen chairs arranged in a horseshoe row with old Eno at the center. Their instruments rested on their knees; their eyes gleamed with the last oily shafts of August sunlight. No one spoke. The old man pointed with his fiddle bow to an empty chair with chromium legs and a ripped plastic seat off to the side. Snipe sat in it and took his guitar out of its case.

Eno Twilight's thick yellow-white hair was matted and clumped like grass in a November field, his face set in deep, mean lines. Even sitting down he had the gray, swollen look of a barn spider, with his thick belly and thin, long shanks. His fiddle was black with age and powdered like a sugar cake with rosin dust. He pointed his bow suddenly at the overalled farmer who sat wheezing an accordion in and out, its suspirations like the labored breathing of someone dying. "Give me a A, Ruby." The major chord welled out of the accordion and the old man twisted his fine-tuning screws delicately. Without a word or signal that Snipe could see, they began the tune. It was new to Snipe, but a simple enough progression to follow. He slid in a little blues run that got him a cold look from old Eno.

"Just a piece of wedding cake beneath my pillow . . ." sang the girl in a hard, sad voice. The sun was gone and the room filled with dusk. The girl was fat, richly, rolling fat, and dressed in black. Her face was beautiful, with broad, high cheekbones and glittering black eyes. Genghis Khan would have loved her, thought Snipe, loving her himself for the bleakness of her voice. Ruby would be her brother, with the same broad face and heavy body. His accordion made a nasal droning undernote like bagpipes, broken every few bars by circus music phrases, flaring, brassy elephant sounds. The effect was curious but not disagreeable. It gave the music a sardonic, rollicking air, like Long John Silver dancing a hornpipe, his wooden leg dotting blood on the captured deck.

Snipe introduced himself after the song ended and gave them a broad, glad-hand smile like a proof of good intent. They didn't care who he was, barely looked at him and he darkened with embarrassment. Again, without warning, they began to play. "Rules was made to be broken," sang fat Nell, and old Eno leaned his cruel face onto the fiddle and laid a line of cloying harmony against her pure voice.

After a few songs Snipe was excited. They were good. Old Eno played his black fiddle with extraordinary virtuosity, com-

plicated rhythms, and difficult bowings, his left hand moving fluidly up and down the fingerboard instead of locking into first position as many backcountry players did. Shirletta, his wife, thin as wire, gray hair in gray plastic curlers, twitched her little mouth and rang her mandolin like a dinner bell.

The songs rolled out, one after another, with only a few seconds between each one. Snipe didn't know any of them. "What's that called?" he would ask at the end of a tune, and the Twilights would stare at him. Someone would mumble, "The Trout's Farewell," or "Wet Hay," or "There's a Little Gravestone in the Orchard," or "Barn Fire," the last a ramping, roaring jig with harmonic yodeling by all the Twilights at such speed that Snipe could only hang on and clang the same chord for six full minutes. "Why haven't I heard that one before?" he cried. "Who does it?" No one answered him.

At 9:00 the old man looked over and said, "Well, Mother, it's time," and the Twilights obediently laid their instruments aside. Snipe's fingers throbbed from hours of playing without a break. The hot kitchen had made him thirsty, but Eno said, "Good night. Next Wednesday same time if you want to come. You ain't too bad, but we don't go in for that fancy stuff.' Snipe knew he meant the blues run.

"Listen, where do you play?" asked Snipe.

"Right here," said the old fiddler, giving him a look as hard as knots in applewood.

"No, I mean, where do you play dances—play out—whatever. *Gigs*, you know?"

"We don't play out."

"You don't play anywhere but here? Nowhere else?"

"Nowhere else. We make a joyful noise unto the Lord." He turned away toward an inner doorway where fat Nell stood hanging around in the dim light. Snipe thought he had heard mockery in the old man's voice.

He would have skipped down the dark track lit by the bobbing circle of his flashlight, but he was afraid of breaking his legs. He felt brilliantly charged with energy. These were real backwoods red-necks and he was playing with them. They were as down and dirty as you could get, he thought. Before he backed down the hill in the darkness, he held the flashlight in his teeth and scribbled all the songs he could remember on the back of Eno's letter: "The Road Accident," "Trumpled in a Fight," "Silver Hooves." Good, authentic rural songs. The real stuff. Where had the Twilights heard them? Seventy-year-old records as thick as pies? Old Eno's childhood radio memories? Local dances? The car cracked over the stones in the night. Snipe sang, "Just a piece of wedding cake beneath my pillow" in his slow, honking voice, the headlights shining in the green eyes of cats in the ditches as he drove back to his rented house.

The house was on a lake, and as he coasted down the drive, lined with its famous sixty-year-old blue Atlas cedars, he could see light from the living-room window falling on the water like spilled oil. The car ticked hotly as he stood in the darkness. Under the slap of the waves against the dock he caught the monotonous pitch of mechanical television voices, and went inside.

Catherine sat in the tan recliner. Her eyes were closed and the desolate flattering blue light of the television mottled her tired face and the white shirt printed with a dancing dog and the words POOCHIE'S GRILL. Snipe turned off the lurching images and she opened her pale eyes. She was thin, a mayonnaise blonde with very light blue eyes like transparent marbles. Catherine surly, ugly, with a flat rump and beautiful strong legs with swelling calves. Catherine, who was getting tired of being broke, getting close to sniffing out Snipe's longing for a gutter.

"You got the job, I hope," she said.

"*Ahhh*," said Snipe, grinning like a set of teeth on a dish, "there really wasn't any job after all. We just played. But some very fine country stuff." He tried to pump some of the old, boy-genius enthusiasm into his voice, to imitate the confident manner he'd used with Catherine two years before when they sat up until 3:00 in the morning drinking expensive wine she had bought and making plans for living by selling bundles of white birch logs tied with red ribbon to fireplace owners in New York City, or growing ginseng roots that they would sell through a friend whose brother knew a pharmacist in Singapore. "Cath, this is an undiscovered group and there's money there, big bucks—records, promotion, tours. The works. This could be the one, baby, it's the one that could get us on the way." He couldn't keep the secret revulsion at the thought of success out of his voice. At once she was furious and shouting.

"My God, no job! Gas and money wasted. I work my butt off down in that kitchen"—she plucked at her Poochie's Grill shirt with disgust—"while you bum around playing free music. The rent on this place with its dismal rotten trees is coming up next week and I haven't got it, and I'm not borrowing from my parents again. It's your turn, buddy. Rob a bank if you have to, but you pay the rent!"

Snipe knew she would get the money from her parents. "What's so goddamn tough about making a few hamburgers to keep the ship floating?" he said. "I've got to build up my music contacts here before I can expect to make any money. It takes time, especially in the country. It's more important I'm doing something I really like, you know that." He couldn't say to her that what he liked was the falling kitchen chair, the wrecked pickup in the weeds.

"Something *you* really like," sneered Catherine.

Snipe was tired of the effort to cajole her. "Listen, you bitch, you forget very conveniently about the months I worked in that butcher shop where nobody had more than two fingers so you could learn Peruvian weaving. Whatever happened to the old Peruvian weaving scam, anyway? Remember, you were going to make a lot of money by weaving serapes or bozos or whatever for Bloomingdale's?"

Catherine's failure to make any money at weaving was a dangerous subject. She flared up again. "You know they wanted indigenous Peruvian. I couldn't help it if I didn't live in a filthy dismal hut on top of the Andes, could I? They didn't want Vermont Peruvian." She glared at Snipe with a horrible expression that reminded him of an early psychology book he had once seen with photographs illustrating the emotions—Catherine was HATE.

Snipe wrenched a beer from the row in the refrigerator after shaking the empty Scotch bottle and went out onto the dock. There were more Atlas cedars along the shore, their long arms hanging forlornly over the water. He looked across the lake at the winking lights along the road and drank his beer, feeling a pleasant pity rising in him. He wondered how much longer Catherine would last. She was spoiled by her rotten-rich mother and father, their soft lips folded, their soft hands slipping an envelope into her purse, not looking at him, writing letters that Catherine hid under the breadbox, long convoluted letters offering her trips to South America to study native weaving techniques, offering a year's rental of a little shop in Old Greenbrier where she could sell the heavy, mud-colored cloaks and leggings she made, offering her vacations with them in the Caribbean, but never mentioning Snipe's name or existence. She'd leave him, sometime. He thought about the Twilights on their mountain farm at the end of the bad road, turning the earth, sowing seed, and in the evenings singing simple songs from their hearts in the shabby kitchen, poor enough so no one cared what they did. The idea came to him that they must have made up all the rueful, hard-times songs themselves, songs that no one heard.

There really could be an album, he thought, and maybe he could really guide them through the sharky waters of country-music promotion. They would wear black costumes, completely black except for a few sequins on the sleeves, black to set off the simplicity of their faces. The album cover would show a photograph of them standing in front of their ratty house, sepia-toned and slightly out of focus, rural

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and plain, the way he had told Catherine their own lives would be when they came to the country. Simple times in an old farmhouse, Shaker chairs by the fire, dew-wet herbs from a little garden, and an isolation and privacy so profound he could get drunk and fall down in the road and no one would see.

But all the old farmhouses had been made over into doctors' vacation homes with eagles over the door and split-rail fences. There wasn't anything to rent until Catherine's mother found "Cedar Cliffs," a modernistic glass horror stinking of money and crowded by forty mammoth blue Atlas cedars set out at the turn of the century. The owners of Cedar Cliffs were friends of Catherine's parents, and the deal went through before Snipe ever saw the place and its melancholy arboretum. They were allowed a reduced rent of $300 a month because it was understood that Snipe would tend the great shaggy branches and clean up the litter of twigs and cones that fell from them in a constant rain.

Snipe went to the Twilights' every Wednesday. He said nothing to them about an album. Each time was like the first time, the same chair, the same headlong rushes into the next unknown tunes, the same closed silence with no talk of the music or the way it was played, just on and on in the gathering dusk. Snipe was carried along by the sound, he played in tune and on time, yet he rode on top of the music like a boat on a wave because old Eno wouldn't make room for him, would not let them open the set pattern of their songs even a crack to let him play a riff or break or to move out a little from the body of sound. Snipe, the outsider, was cast into a background corner, a foreign tourist who did not know the language, who would not stay, who was only passing through.

He kept on trying to belong to them by cawing enthusiastically after a song, "Hey, all right man! That's really fine. Way to go!" He tried to soften Eno's hardness with relentless questions about bowings and techniques that the old man scorned to answer. One night he asked him, "You ever play the guitar?"

The old man stared blankly at Snipe for a moment, his lips moving in and out, then got up and laid his fiddle on the chair. He went into the back room off the kitchen, and they heard the metal snap of latches being undone. Eno came out with a guitar made of painted metal and on the back a picture of a Hawaiian hula dancer swaying beneath a coconut palm. "That," said old Eno, "is a resonator guitar that my Uncle Bell give me in 1942. This is what we use when we work up a new song." He looked over at Nell, stroked the woman-shaped body of the guitar with his old man's hand, slid his finger under the strings and caressed the edge of the sound hole. Snipe felt some dark, unspoken words trembling in the room. He stretched out his hand for the instrument, but before he could touch it, Eno hustled it jealously into the back room. "I wouldn't take nothing on this earth for it," he said. When he came back to his fiddle, away they all went with "Fried Potatoes," fat Nell belting out "French fries, home fries, potato cakes, potato pies," but looking sidelong at Snipe—with complicity, he thought—as if she wanted to laugh with him at the old man's tin guitar.

That was the night he saw how the trick was done. It was Nell, not Eno, who controlled which songs they played, and the tunes, he saw, had all been arranged at some earlier time in unchanging sets of six or seven. If she began with "There Is a Stranger in My Room Tonight," there must follow "Frozen Roses," and then "Rain on the Roof Makes Me Lonely." But if she began with "Lost Girls" or "Grass Fire," different sets of songs followed. He noticed for the first time that she hummed a few notes of the key song in each set as a signal to the others of what was coming. In his back corner he had never caught it. It was Nell who was the master of the group, not Eno.

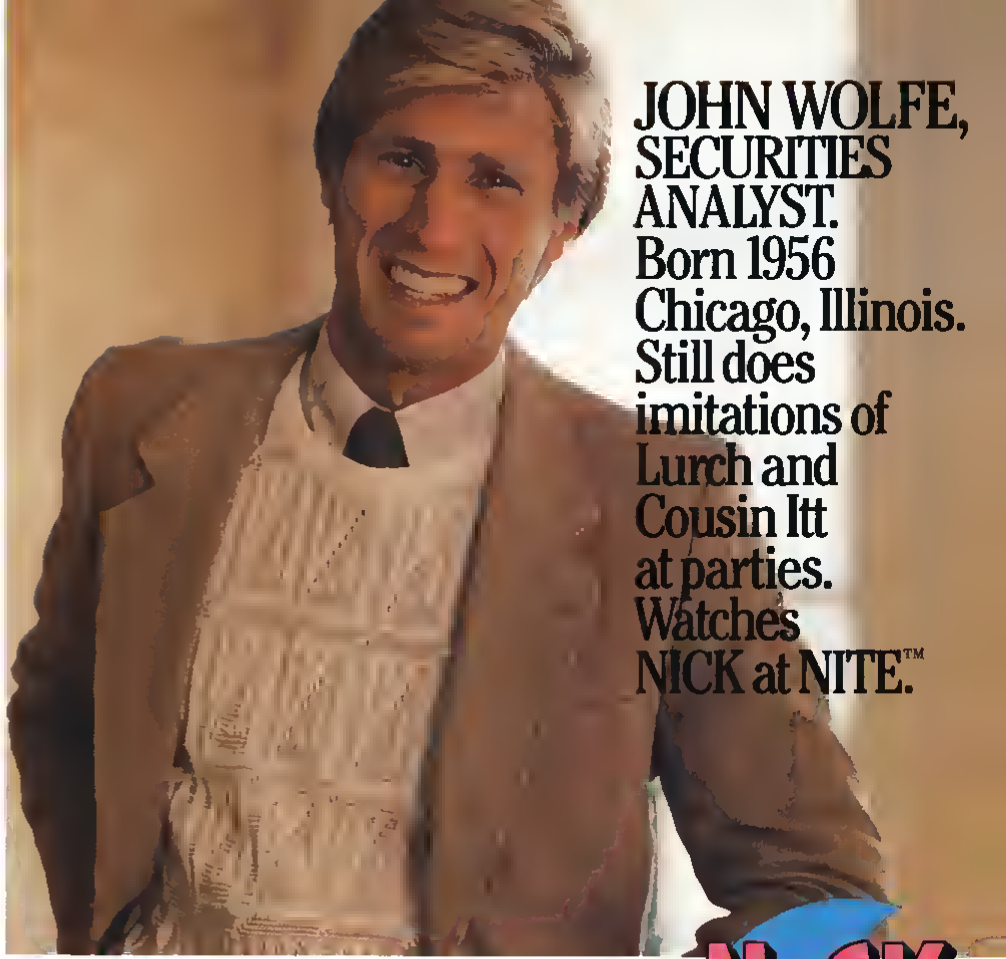
Snipe began to play to her, even when old Shirletta trampled his filigreed arpeggios with her steely tremolo and Ruby drowned his fine, silken harmonics with flaring chords. He knew she heard every note he sent her. Nell, who wrote the songs and melodies, Nell, who wrung lyrics and music from her life as casually as water from a dishrag. Now, on the sepia-toned album cover in his mind Nell stood alone.

He began to write a song himself, about the cedars—"I Am a Prisoner of Some Green Trees"—and practiced for hours. The tune was a little like "Clementine." Catherine would come home smelling of hamburgers and find him hunched over the guitar, reworking a tiny phrase with numbed fingers, the Scotch bottle on the floor, his back bent in futile concentration. For it was obvious that he had reached some plateau of accomplishment, that despite the passionate practice (intended to keep him from looking for a job, said Catherine), his playing failed to become brilliant, his phrasing and intonation remained hesitant. Yet he continued to sing and bay. The two hours he spent in the Twilights' kitchen each Wednesday night sending musical messages to a fat woman with whom he had never spoken were the only times he felt he was approaching some form of happiness.

He thrust his song at them one night. "I made up this song about some trees, like I really like them but they are keeping me from doing what I wanna with my life," he said, not looking at Eno, and sang directly to Nell. The Twilights got the hang of the song right away and came in one by one, and when Nell sang in harmony with him "tall trees are my jail bars" he felt it was one of his life's finest times. He wanted to play through the song again, but Eno pointed his bow at Nell in an abrupt slash and she took them into "The Fallen Fawn."

In late September the frosts began, shriveling the clumps of maidenhair fern but sparing the last spotted tiger lilies. The coarse, vivid green of summer dulled: the meadow grass lodged under the weight of the autumn rain. The motionless air chilled, became thin and clear. Catherine did not come home one night, and Snipe knew she must have spent it with the new owner of Pooche's Grill, a grinner named Omar, who had changed the name of the restaurant to Omar's Oasis, put in four palms and a ceiling fan, and hung some of Catherine's brown weavings on the wall as though they were paintings.

Snipe had feelings of melancholy, noticed leaf veins, flakes of mica in rocks, extraordinarily fine hairs on plant stems. The smell of woodsmoke and damp earth made his eyes flood with reasonless tears. Late one afternoon he stood on the dock drinking Scotch from the brown Mexican glass Catherine had brought back from the Acapulco vacation with her parents the last winter. He stared at a peculiar fenticular cloud. He could hear the sullen hum of a truck on the road beyond the lake. The bottom fell out of everything in an instant. The melancholy of autumn, the truck's



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buzz, and a tinny, faraway chain saw made Snipe feel in a rush of misery that he had hardly had an hour's true happiness. The chance for that had gone when he followed Catherine in false respect for imitation Peruvian weaving. He wanted fat Nell and the freedom of dirty sheets, wanted to play music from a broken chair and not to have to make a mark in the world. That night he lay awake while Catherine's snoring blended with the dying whines of cicadas.

In the morning he waited until he heard Catherine slam the door and drive away with Omar, then he rose, washed his hair and body, and dressed in clean clothes, wearing for the first time the black silk shirt she had given him for his birthday. He drove down the gravel road between the hemlocks and turned onto the Twilights' ruined track.

Nell was alone in the kitchen making jelly. Shirletta, she said, had gone to town with her sister's daughter to buy school clothes for the kids. Ruby and Eno were cutting firewood up in back. He could hear the chain saws in the maple sugar bush beyond the cornfields. The kitchen was flooded with the heavy, cloying perfume of blackberry jelly. Nell leaned her stomach against the sink and hummed. The jelly bag slumped flaccidly in a bowl like some excised organ from a slaughtered animal. There was crimson scum clotted in the sink where she had flung it, skimmed from the seething jelly in the kettle. Her hands were stained purple and a rose flush tinted her round, solid arms the strong column of her neck. Her hair was wound up in shining, thick braids. Jelly jars glittered the color of chambered pomegranates as they stood cooling on the table, translucent skins of wax hardening on the surface. The chain saws were as monotonous as the night cicadas.

Snipe came up behind her and wrapped his arms around her waist, pressed his sallow face against her hot back. She smelled of road dust, of goldenrod and crushed sweet blackberries; her humming voice vibrated in his ear. Far away in the woods there was a cadenced shout and the leafy thrashing fall of a tree. He felt himself burning onto her like a pancake on a griddle. The chain saws faded from hearing. A yellow jacket, intoxicated by the sweet, musky scent, flew clumsily around the kitchen. Snipe gathered up Nell's flowery dress hem as carefully as if he were picking up glass jackstraws.

Later, while he was still pressed against her, she said, "They're coming down from the woods." They stared together at the field where the men were bumping along through the uncut hay like a vaudeville team mocking drunkards. "Ruby's hurt," she said, pushing him away and turning to face the door. He smoothed himself and went over to stand beside the hot stove where the jelly burned.

They came in. Ruby grinning in a fixed way as though a set of vise-grips had bolted his jaw. His left arm was wrapped in Eno's bloodstained shirt. There were flecks of bloody matter on his face, and he held the injured arm protectively across his chest. The thick, white hair on old Eno's naked chest and bulging belly was flattened and mussed like a deer bed in the orchard; the two dark nipples peeping out like plum-colored eyes. They went to the sink, Eno on one side, Ruby swaying in the center, and Nell with her dimpled hands cupping the elbow of the hurt arm.

Snipe felt his throat bind as Nell unwrapped the shirt and laid bare the injury. Drops of blood fell heavily into the sink, puddling with the jelly. Snipe could smell Eno's underarms, a sharp, skunky odor that mixed with the reek of hot sex and sugared fruit. "Get them bandages they give us that time," said old Eno, and Nell went into the pantry. They heard her tear open paper. She and Eno leaned together as they bound the surgical pad to Ruby's wound with a thick roll of gauze. A small red flower bloomed on the snowy bandage. "Hold that arm up in the air," said Eno, hoisting Ruby's elbow.

Later, Snipe thought that he should have gotten away then; should have slipped out the door, rolled the car silently down the track, and raced for the protection of the cedars. Instead, he said, "Shouldn't he have a tourniquet on that arm?" Eno turned to stare at him, to wonder a few seconds, then the old man's eyes went to Nell. Her head was bent, her eyes down, and she wrapped and wrapped the gauze.

"Not if I want to keep my goddamned hand," said Ruby in a rough, clenched voice, but the point of crisis had shifted from his wound to Snipe's presence and Nell's hidden face. A knowledge of what had happened in the kitchen mounted as steadily as rising floodwater. Ruby set his mouth in a sardonic grin, but old Eno's hands were trembling, and he gasped for breath as though he were the one who had been wounded.

"Eno!" cried Snipe in a panic, "I love your daughter!" and he knew that he did not. It had always been the truck in the weeds.

"Fool," said Ruby between his teeth, "she's his wife."

Snipe could hear the scorched jelly crackling in the kettle. He glanced at the door, and at once Eno came for him, his heavy farmer's hands crooked into pincers. "I'll get you," he cried, his eyes slitted with rage and his teeth bared like a dog's. "I'll get you!"

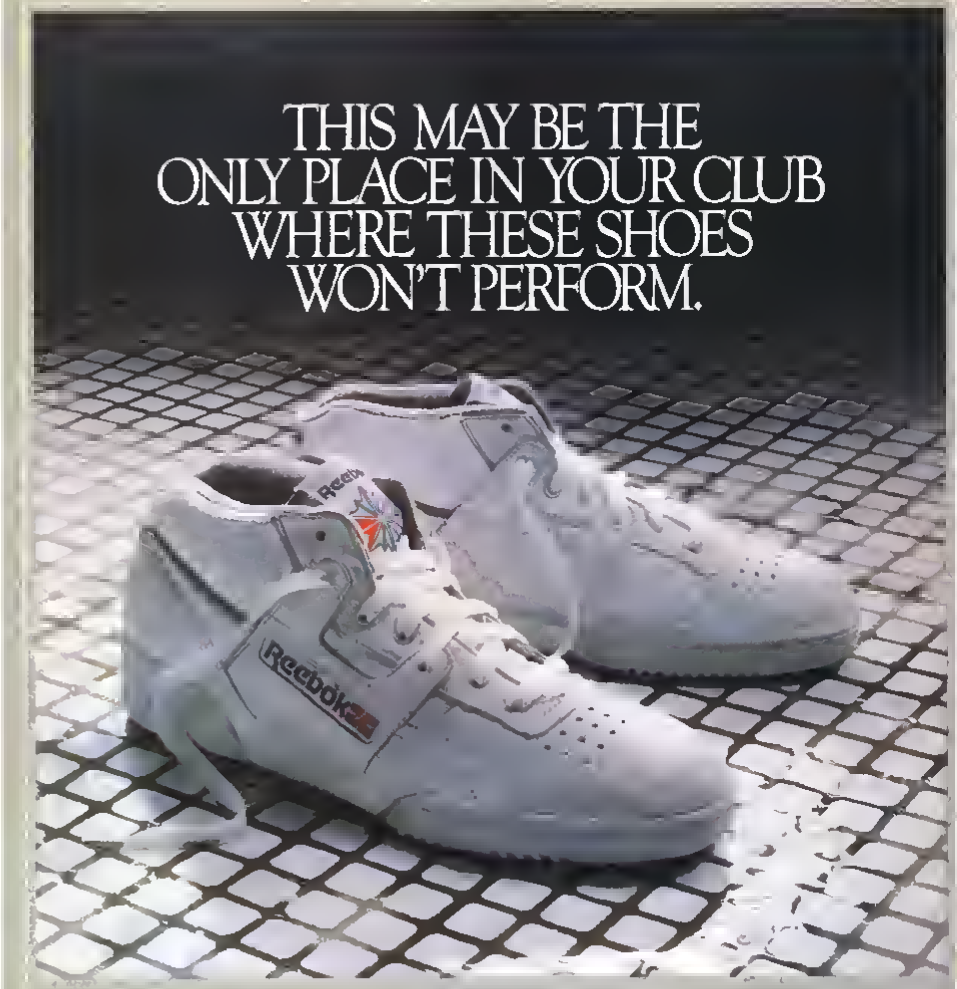
Snipe ran, stumbling on the bloody shirt, skidding on the stone doorstep, breaking his fingernails on the car's door handle, jamming his foot painfully between the accelerator and the brake, and then cursing and shaking as the vehicle crashed down the rocky track. "Goddamn hillbillies," he said to the rearview mirror.

He drove fifty miles to the big town in the next county and drank Scotch at Bob's Bar, a plywood-paneled hole with imitation Tiffany lampshades made of plastic. The raw red and blue colors hurt his eyes and gave him a headache. When someone put Willie Nelson on the antique jukebox, he left. He wanted to hear Haydn. Haydn seemed safe and alluring like a freshly made bed with plump white pillows and a silken comforter. He could sink into Haydn.

He bought a symphony on tape at the discount drugstore, then hit the shopping mall for all of Catherine's favorites, the champagne, lobster, hearts of endive, a Black Forest cake, and Viennese coffee with cinnamon. It came to more than a hundred dollars and he wrote bad checks with the sure feeling that he and Catherine would make a lucky new start. He was all through with the Twilights. When she got home he would have everything ready, fireplace lit, fresh sheets, chilled champagne glasses. He was suffused with mounting nervousness like a bird before a storm, and went again and again through the long afternoon to the end of the dock to stand and stare across the water, longing for Catherine's two hundred fragile bones and her shallow flesh. When a dead branch fell from one of the cedars, he dragged it eagerly to the moldering pile behind the garage.

It was easy. She came back to him willingly, ready to play their old games. They made fun of Omar's restaurant hands, and Snipe said the country-music thing wasn't working out. There were other things they could do, maybe go out west, New Mexico or Arizona. Snipe knew somebody who would pay him good money to collect the wild seed of jimsonweed.

They lay in the pillows in the corner of the sofa, Snipe's fingers sliding automatically up and down her arm, the rough callouses rasping on the silk. After a while Haydn's precise measures were like faded pencil drawings on thin paper. The champagne bottle was empty. Catherine rolled passionately against him, and with the dry feeling that he was saying catechism he rested his mouth against the beat of her heart. He thought how it would be out west with the flat, sepia-toned earth and the immense sky of a hard, lonely blue. Out there the roads stretched forever to the horizon. Snipe saw himself alone, driving a battered old truck through the shimmering heat, the wind booming through the open windows. The windshield was starred with a bullet hole. He wore scuffed cowboy boots, faded jeans, and a torn black shirt with a cactus embroidered on the back, and the heel of his hand beat out a Tex-Mex rhythm on the cracked steering wheel. ●



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On Writing

How to Write a Novel

by John Gregory Dunne

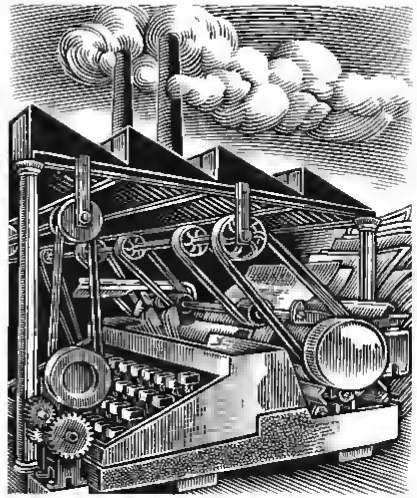


ILLUSTRATION: ROBERT TINE-ROBINSON

On June 6, 1982, *The New York Times Book Review* asked a number of writers to describe their work in progress. I did not have a work in progress, only a contract for a work in progress, but no matter: if a writer is asked to describe a work in progress, perhaps the work in progress might actually progress. And so for the *Times* I wrote: "This summer I am going to Central America and will be working on a novel called *The Red, White and Blue*. The trip and the novel are not related, but who knows?... All I know about *The Red, White and Blue* is that Scott Fitzgerald considered a similar title for *The Great Gatsby*. What will it be about? About 600 pages, I hope."

The result of this fabrication was that my publisher invited me to lunch at The Four Seasons to discuss the work in progress, and the progress I was making on it. The night before the lunch, I sat down at my typewriter in a suite at the Carlyle Hotel that a movie company was picking up the tab for in the misplaced hope that I was paying more attention to the screenplay I was allegedly writing than I was to the novel the producers did not know I allegedly had in progress. In a spasm of fear, I wrote the following sentence: "When the trial began, we left the country." An hour or so later I had reached the point where I could note in my diary the next day, "Lunch w/ JE [my publisher]—showed her 1st 3–4 pp RWB." And thus began four years at the factory.

What civilians do not understand—and to a writer anyone not a writer is a civilian—is that writing is manual labor of the mind: a job, like laying pipe. Although I had not written a word, I had in fact thought a great deal about the novel over the course of the preceding year. I knew what the first sentence was going to be, and I also knew the last—it is a peculiarity of mine that I always know the last sentence of a book before I begin. That last sentence I intended to be a line of dialogue, either "No" or "Yes," with the penultimate line its reverse, either Yes or No, not in dialogue. It was the six or seven hundred pages between "When the trial began, we left the country" and "No" (or "Yes") that seemed a desert I could not irrigate.

I also knew the book would have a first-person narrator, largely because I had never used one before. The narrator I had in mind was the narrator of Ford Madox Ford's *The Good Soldier*, a commentator on events and actions that had taken place years before the book actually begins, events and actions at times not even witnessed and at best only dimly understood, events and actions that in my case the narrator would have to reconstruct through letters and diaries and videotapes and secondhand accounts and Freedom of Information files and whatever else came to mind. "You'll be sorry," my wife, who is also a novelist, said when I told her my plan, and how right she was.

That summer of 1982 I did go to Central America, and I saw the possibilities for a section of the book I would not address for another three and a half years; my notes for the trip were twice as long as the section that eventually appeared in the manuscript. In September, I cleared away all other commitments and began concentrating on the book full time. By the summer of 1983, I had completed 262 pages—and none of it seemed to work. Individual scenes played, but the narrative did not hold together. Narrative, I should explain, is not plot. Plot is, "The queen died, the king died"; narrative is, "The queen died, the king died of a broken heart." (I would like to claim that definition as my own, but I think it comes by way of Nabokov.) Because one has written other books does not mean the next becomes any easier. Each book in fact is a tabula rasa; from book to book I seem to forget how to get characters in and out of rooms—a far more difficult task than the nonwriter might think. Still I went to my office every day. That is the difference between the professional and the amateur. The professional guts a book through this period, in full knowledge that what he is doing is not very good. Not to work is to exhibit a failure of nerve, and a failure of nerve is the best definition I know for writer's block.

In August 1983, I put the manuscript aside and traveled to France and England, armed with my tattered copy of *The Good Soldier*, which by then went everywhere with me, not so much a book to read as a talisman to hold and touch. I was also accompanied by a photocopy of an interview Philip Roth had given *The New York Times*

JOHN GREGORY DUNNE will be contributing a monthly column about writing and books

in 1977. "My own way," Roth had said. "seems to be to write six months of trash—heterosexual trash usually—and then to give up in despair, filing away a hundred pages or so that I can't stand, to find ten pages or so that are actually alive . . . ." The despair of another writer is enormously reassuring to one who thinks his own despair is unique.

Back home, I started all over again on page 1, circling the 262 pages like a vulture looking for live flesh to scavenge. I knew the problem. The narrative was too constricted; it was like a fetus strangling on its own umbilical cord. Knowing the problem, however, is not the same as solving it. The second draft, which I began in euphoria in the fall of 1983, I abandoned seventy-two pages later, again on the outskirts of despair.

I was now in 1984, having worked steadily for nearly two years with almost nothing to show for it except a file box full of pages with typing on them. To clear my head I wrote a long piece for *The New York Review of Books* about a septuagenarian former Hollywood Communist who had come out of the closet of his past, as it were, disguised as a prizewinning young Mexican novelist. I also needed money if I was ever going to finish this damn book, and I agreed to write the screen adaptation of Norman Mailer's novel *The Deer Park*. The fee was simply too high to pass up; with taxes and the commissions of agents, lawyer, and accountants deducted, my wife and I would have enough to keep us for approximately another two years.

The cruelties of life had also intervened. "When the trial began, we left the country," I had written that spring of 1982. Five months later my niece was murdered, and when her killer came to trial in Los Angeles the following summer my wife and I indeed did leave the country. "I do not understand people who attend the trials of those accused of murdering their loved ones," I had continued in those three or four pages I had shown my publisher at The Four Seasons, half a year before any of this happened. "You see them on the local newscasts . . . . I watch them kiss the prosecutor when the guilty verdict is brought in or scream at those jurors who were not convinced that the pimply-faced defendant was the buggerer of Jimmy and the dismemberer of Johnny." I wondered for several years if I should retain those lines in the final manuscript, should I ever complete it, in a slightly altered version I did. There, with all its emotional baggage, was the obscenity of coincidence.

Then in the summer of 1984, when my wife and I were in East Hampton working on the screenplay of *The Deer Park* with Sidney Lumet, my closest friend suffered in rapid succession a stroke and a massive heart attack. His name was Barry Farrell, and for the last six months of his life he lay semicomatose in a Veterans Administration hospital not five minutes from my house in Los Angeles. Writers do not make easy friends of one another, they are professional carpers, too competitive, mean-spirited, and envious for the demands of lasting friendship. With occasional lapses from grace, Barry and I were an exception to this rule. I had known him for twenty-five years, since we both worked at *Time*—through the accidental death of his son and through a divorce. His youngest child was named Joan Didion Farrell after my wife. Every morning at 9:15, he and I would talk on the telephone: a natter, he would call it. The New York and Los Angeles newspapers would be read by then, and with ribald shrewdness he would give me a close textual exegesis of the morning's news. Barry was one of those rare people who talked in complete sentences, every sentence perfectly parsed, plural predicates for plural subjects, no dangling participles, every clause modifying what it was supposed to modify, *that* never confused with *which*. I would often tell him I wished a tape-recording device could be implanted under his skin to record his conversation, throwing out its tape at the end of the day. That, I said, would solve his writing block. His private life was untidy; he could not write and drank, he drank and could not write. His death shattered me. I cannot hear the telephone ring at 9:15 anymore without a frisson. It will not be Barry.

On New Year's Day, 1985, two weeks after Barry's funeral, I began *The Red, White and Blue* for the third time. This time it went well from the start. The two failed previous drafts yielded nuggets I had not been able to find before. Those first three or four pages I had written in the spring of 1982 became, in the spring of 1986, the last five pages of a 710-page novel: pages 44–46 in the second draft became pages 304–307 in the third. Slowly the book began to open up. In a churchyard in the Cotswolds, I found the name of a nineteenth-century churchwarden—Bentley Innocent, I immediately gave his surname to a character of my own. On that same trip, an English novelist told me about a *papeterie* on rue de l'Ancienne Comédie that was the only place in Paris that sold the notebooks he and I favored; I set a scene there. In Barry Farrell's papers I found an instruction sheet from the Nevada Department of Prisons on how to operate "a lethal gas chamber" for an execution and how to clean it when the job was completed ("After each execution, sinks, plugs, pot and entire inside of cabinet should be washed down with warm water and a detergent, add two ounces of agua ammonia to each gallon of water . . . .") Here was a perfect example of bureaucracy gone mad; it went into the manuscript. "He has an enthusiasm for tragedy," I remembered Barry once saying about someone; it went into the manuscript. "Let's get the cows to Abilene," the producer of *The Deer Park* had said when the delivery of the screenplay was delayed—into the manuscript.

I devised stratagems and inside jokes to relieve the clock-punching tedium of a book that was building by only a page or a page and a half a day. I named someone after a character in one of my wife's earlier novels, a corpse received a name I have now used in four books. Because I believe scores are made to be settled, I settled a couple of scores in a way that only the person against whom the score is being settled would ever recognize, if indeed that person ever read the book. In my last novel, I had some gratuitous sport with Peter Jennings, the ABC anchorman, and when a friend of his asked how I could be beastly about someone I did not know, I replied, "Never be rude to a stranger, because the stranger may turn out to be a novelist with a long memory."

January 5, 1986, the first Monday of the new year: I now had 493 pages of *The Red, White and Blue* completed. In the next three months, I worked seven days a week, taking only one day off during that entire stretch, seldom going out at night. This was the magic time that made up for the previous three and a half years of toil and anxiety and suicidal depression. It is like a dream sexual experience. Everything seems to work, the chance encounter, the overheard remark in a restaurant feed into the next day's material, opening up possibilities you had never considered. In three months I wrote 230 pages, in the last two weeks alone, ninety-two. On Sunday, April 6, at 2:19 in the afternoon, I wrote the last sentence: "No."

The book took two months short of four years to write, with another year spent taking notes and thinking about it. In the course of those four years, this is what I also did: I wrote three pieces for *The New York Review of Books* and a second screenplay, an adaptation of Carlos Fuentes's *The Old Gringo*, a meditation by Carlos (a good friend) on what happened to Ambrose Bierce when he went down to Mexico to die. The screenplay, without me, is in another stage of development, but from a biography of Bierce I would not otherwise have read I did get the book's epigraph. "History is an account, mostly false, of events, mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools." Other than these interruptions, only the book. Four years, 1,400 days, 710 pages, prorated, it amounts to half a page, 125 words, a day. Put that way, not much to show for four years. But that is the writer's life. You write. You finish. You start over again.

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